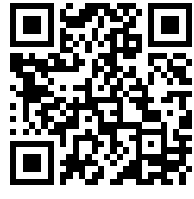
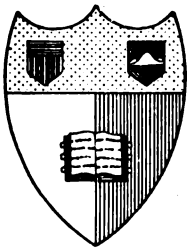
This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

https://books.google.com



BT
875
A35
v 7-9



Cornell University Library
Ithaca, New York

LIBRARY OF
LEWIS BINGLEY WYNNE
A.B., A.M., COLUMBIAN COLLEGE, '71, '73
WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE GIFT OF
MRS. MARY A. WYNNE
AND
JOHN H. WYNNE
CORNELL '98
1922

Digitized by Google

The date shows when this volume was taken.

To renew this book copy the call No. and give to the librarian.

NOV 6 1979 C

HOME USE RULES

All books subject to recall

All borrowers must register in the library to borrow books for home use.

All books must be returned at end of college year for inspection and repairs.

Limited books must be returned within the four week limit and not renewed.

Students must return all books before leaving town. Officers should arrange for the return of books wanted during their absence from town.

Volumes of periodicals and of pamphlets are held in the library as much as possible. For special purposes they are given out for a limited time.

Borrowers should not use their library privileges for the benefit of other persons.

Books of special value and gift books, when the giver wishes it, are not allowed to circulate.

Readers are asked to report all cases of books marked or mutilated.

Do not deface books by marks and writing.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

3 1924 093 210 932

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

PROPHETIC TIMES.

A Monthly Serial

OF

SACRED LITERATURE AND CURRENT EVENTS,
TOUCHING THE COMING AND KINGDOM OF THE LORD JESUS
AND RELATED SUBJECTS.

EDITED BY

REV. DRS. SEISS, NEWTON, AND OTHERS.

VOL. VII.

"And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."
GAL. 6:9.

P. O. Box 2245.
PHILADELPHIA:
SHERMAN & CO., PRINTERS.
1869.

Digitized by Google

A549403

"Behold, I come quickly."

REV. 22 : 12.

BLESSED Lord God! awaken Thou us, that, when Thy Son cometh, we may be prepared joyfully to receive Him, and with pure hearts to serve Thee; through the same, Thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

REV. 22 : 20.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS OF VOLUME VII.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

	PAGE
Israel and the Church,	1, 17, 33, 49, 65, 81
Thoughts on Genesis 18 and 19,	5
Read your Bible (Poetry),	7
Ministering Angels,	21
Strange Phenomenon,	22
Mary Magdalene and Thomas,	37
The Error of the Wicked,	53
Star of the Advent (Poetry),	55
Jacob's Vision,	69
Aleh Kereach,	70
Covenant Relations,	85
Gather them Home (Poetry),	89
The First Promise,	113
Brute Creatures in the World to Come,	118
Chronology,	121
I shall be Satisfied (Poetry),	124
The Last Trumpet,	145
Characteristics of the Times,	146
Watching (Poetry),	150
"The Days We Live In,"	161
Evils Abounding,	163
Observations on Matt. 10 : 23,	165
That Day (Poetry),	167

SELECTIONS.

	PAGE
Man's Day,	8
The Valley of Jehoshaphat,	10
Napoleon and Europe,	23
The Sun and Moon,	24
Alive Two Thousand Years (Poetry),	24
The Year 1868,	40
Hiding in God (Poetry),	41
Nature Unending,	41
Shrinking from Christ's Coming,	56
Healing Slightly,	60
Final Satisfaction,	72
Earth not our Home (Poetry),	73
Matt. 24,	90
Spiritualistic Pretensions,	95
Bonaparte and the Papacy,	96
The Peace Prospects,	96
The Unseen One,	125
Christ's Coming,	127
The Resurrection of Children,	129
The Signs of the Times,	132
Christ and Christendom,	150
Religious Dangers of the Continent,	154
Hope on, Hope ever (Poetry),	156
Where is the Promised Kingdom of God?	168
Foreshadows of Antichrist,	169
The Day of the Lord,	171
The Coming of our King,	177
Increase of Earthquakes,	177

Digitized by Google

EDITORIAL.

	PAGE
Time to Awake,	11
Editorial Correspondence,	15
The World when Christ Comes,	16
Daniel and his Prophecies,	25, 42
What does it Mean?	29
A New Witness,	31
European War Clouds,	48
Babylon,	61
Dr. Seiss on the Apocalypse,	64
Spiritualism,	74
The World in the Day of Judgment,	78
The Great Pyramid,	97
Words to Faithful Watchers,	102
Freedom,	109
A Word to our Readers,	133
An Inspired Epitome,	133
More Words to Faithful Watchers,	136
The Doctrine of Forgiveness,	139
Enoch's Faith,	144
Christ in us and we in Christ,	157
The Doctrine of the Millennium,	178
False Christs,	183
Faith,	184
The Bruised Reed,	185
A Word about Ourselves,	190

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VII. JANUARY, 1869. No. 1.

Special Contributions.

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH.

Ever since the calling of Abraham and the covenant made with him, the dispensations of God's grace and mercy to man have had respect to his seed, both "that which is of the law" and "that which is of the faith of Abraham;" for the promises include both according to their different relations and conditions; and furnish ground for the distinction indicated by our title,—Israel and the Church.

By the Church we understand the elect people of God, not only as distinguished from the world out of which they are chosen, but also from the professed people of God, with whom they are to a certain extent identified. By Israel we understand the seed of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel when he wrestled and prevailed with the messenger of Jehovah. We shall have to notice other applications of these terms as we proceed. For some two thousand years, Israel was ostensibly the only people of God on the earth. Their calling, and the dealings of God with them, were designed to subserve an important end in the preservation of the Church, or elect people of God. The moral corruption of mankind before the deluge, had nearly overwhelmed the righteous seed, making it necessary to destroy the world, and save Noah, the only righteous one of his generation, and his family, and through them to repopulate the earth under different physical, moral and political arrangements, better adapted to conserve the purpose of God for the redemption of a righteous seed—His elect Church. And the almost universal defection of mankind from the worship of God to idolatry, at the calling of Abraham, had shown the necessity of instituting some other measures, by which a total apostasy might be avoided. Hence the calling of Abraham, and the separation of his seed in the line of Isaac and Jacob, to be a peculiar people unto God. Hence the covenants made with him and with them, which, while agreeing with the general scheme of redemption, included some special grants — some absolute — some conditional; some respecting Israel and others the Church: the knowledge of which is essential to a full understanding of the Gospel scheme, and the mysteries of redemption by Jesus Christ.

Two treatises, one, "The Jews and the Christian Church," by Prof. E. W. Hengstenberg; the other, "Israel's Judicial Blindness," by Joseph L. Lord, M.A., have attracted considerable attention, and are likely to exert an influence on the opinions of many, in reference to the present and future relations of Israel and the Church, prejudicial to the cause of truth. The theory of Prof. Hengstenberg is, "that the Christian Church is a continuance of Israel," and "to it belong most of the promises which are supposed to furnish a pledge of the future salvation of the Jews," and "have already found their fulfilment in the victorious career pursued by the Church through all past centuries," though they "are, at the same time, fitted to awaken and sustain hopes concerning the Jews," and "that they will yet attain to greater importance in the Kingdom of God;" by which he means the Christian Church. He holds that they are to be converted and added to the Church after the heathen nations are brought in, and by the labors of the heathen

Digitized by Google

nations; but that they will be converted individually, and not as a nation. That "the type of Jewish nationality" was, at the Christian era, "stamped on all nations that entered into the Church of Christ," and "their true nationality terminated." And that what remains to them "has for its centre, hatred to Christ," is crumbling to pieces, and will utterly vanish with their conversion, and incorporation into the Christian Church, which, as the continuation of Israel, is the Zion and Jerusalem meant in the prophecies and promises respecting their restoration. Hence there will be no restoration of Jewish nationality in the land of promise—no "future glorious Kingdom of Israel" there. "Their original nationality has become the common property of all Christians," and "every day the Jews participate more fully in the life of the Christian nations, amidst which they have taken up their abode."

The theory of Mr. Lord is, that "the prophetic history of Israel includes the whole of three distinct dispensations; the past, or Mosaic; the present, or Christian, and the future, or Millennial." "That the Mosaic was to Israel, as a nation, a disciplinary or probationary dispensation; that the Christian is to Israel, a judicial or penal, as it is to the Gentile nations, a probationary dispensation; Israel remaining in her judicial blindness until its close; and that the Millennial will be to Israel a dispensation of everlasting peace, and repose, and honor, and blessing, and glory, and exaltation above all the nations of the earth;" "when the theocracy which Israel forfeited by her sins, and of which, in the multitude of her iniquities and transgressions, she was unworthy, shall be gloriously restored, and the warfare of the elect Church militant, and the predicted overturning and overturning and overturning of the unbelieving nations being ended, the Root and Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star, shall arise and shine, and sit upon the throne of His father David, in the manifested, triumphant and covenanted glory both of His Davidic and spiritual kingdom, and reign forever and ever." That the judicial blindness of Israel began in the days of Isaiah, and, increasing daily, rendered them "incapable of understanding the mysteries of Christ's spiritual kingdom on the earth, under the present Gospel dispensation, as revealed in His public and unexplained parables." "That the kingdom of God illustrated by the parables is the spiritual kingdom or professing Church in its present earthly form and manifestation, throughout the whole course of the Gospel dispensation, from the beginning to the end of it." "That Christ first offered to the Jewish nation, not the Davidic and temporal kingdom which they had expected, but His spiritual kingdom only, upon conditions which were as repugnant to their ceremonial self-righteousness as it was to their infatuated worldly hopes and expectations." Hence they rejected Him, and still remain in their judicial blindness, and must so remain until "He will appear again to overthrow forever Gentile ascendency and oppression in the earth," when "the spirit of grace and supplications shall be poured upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the vail shall be lifted from their eyes, and God's ancient covenants concerning Israel and Jerusalem will be fully realized."

These theories, plausibly presented, and seemingly sustained by Scriptural quotations, though viewing things from different standpoints, agree in the idea that the kingdom of God is the Christian Church of the Gospel dispensation, which, with its spiritual blessings, was offered to the Jews in the ministry of Jesus, and by them, in their judicial blindness, rejected; and that they will remain in that blindness until after the close of this dispensation, when they will be converted and brought into the Christian Church. But here they diverge. One denies the future restoration of Jewish nationality, the other affirms it; one holds that they will only be converted individually, the other that they will be converted as a nation; one maintains that the heathen nations, being converted and brought into the Church at the close of this dispensation, will be the instrumentality of Israel's conversion; the other, that Gentile apostasy will culminate at the close of this dispensation, in their oppression of restored Israel, and will be overthrown by the personal coming of Christ to deliver Israel; and that

Digitized by Google

this demonstration in their behalf, accompanied by an outpouring of the Spirit, will effect their conversion; one holds that the Jews, at their conversion, will be absorbed in the Christian Church, which has succeeded to their original nationality, and that they will thenceforward have no distinctive national existence or peculiar blessedness; the other, that restored and redeemed Israel will be exalted to the foremost places among the nations of the earth, and dwell safely on the high places of Jacob, among their vines and fig-trees, their olives and their palms, and all the nations, being converted through their ministry, shall call them blessed, and rejoice with them in the fulfilment of all their ancient covenants and blessings.

It cannot be that both these theories are true; for even their agreements are more apparent than real, and their contradictions are radical and irreconcilable. It is far more likely that both are erroneous, though containing some truths. We will try them by the word of God, which is properly regarded as the only infallible authority on the subject; an authority to which both appeal, and which alone can settle the question, and guide our minds into the truth.

And, first, we find that, wherein they seemingly agree, they agree in error, in holding that the kingdom of God is the professing Church. Professor Hengstenberg, regarding the Christian Church as simply a continuance of Israel, says: "There is but one Church of God, one Israel, one house under two administrations from the days of Abraham till the end of the world;" and he speaks of the times of Abraham as "the very beginning of the kingdom of God;" and proselytes of Israel, he calls, "born heathens," who "become members of the kingdom of God;" and says: "The living idea which formed the groundwork of Israel's nationality was that of the kingdom of God." To this nationality he holds that the Christian Church succeeded, or was simply a continuance of it, and the conversion of the Jews is set forth as their being brought into the kingdom of God, consequently, the professing Christian Church is now the kingdom of God. Mr. Lord defines the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven to be "Christ's spiritual kingdom, or the professing Church under its present earthly form and manifestation;" but he also uses language which implies that the professing Church, in its Jewish form, was the kingdom of God, for he says: "The meaning (of Christ's words, Matt. 21:47) is that the Messiah's spiritual kingdom should be taken from the Jewish nation, considered as the Jewish Church, Christ's only visible Church on earth hitherto." It is evident, then, that both regard the kingdom of heaven as the professing Church under both administrations, the Jewish and the Christian.

Now, if this is so, the terms "kingdom of heaven" and "professing Church" are equivalent, and the latter may be substituted for the former, without involving any absurdity or incongruity. But, apply this test, and all is jargon, for what relevancy is there in "Repent ye, for the *professing Church* is at hand?" (Matt. 3:2); and "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall, in no case, enter into the *professing Church?*" (Matt. 5:20); and "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the *professing Church?*" (Matt. 19:24), when, according to their theory, the "professing Church" had existed from the days of Abraham, and the Jews, including the scribes, and Pharisees, and rich men, constituted that Church. Is it the reward promised to the poor in spirit and the persecuted for righteousness sake that "theirs is the *professing Church?*" (Matt. 5:3, 10.) How does it appear that the "least in the *professing Church*" was greater than John the Baptist, when he was a burning and shining light in it? (Matt. 11:11.) Did the penitent thief mean to ask Christ to remember him when He came into His *professing Church?* Luke 23:42. Is it through much tribulation we enter into the *professing Church?* (Acts 14:22.) Enough; it is shown that the term professing Church cannot be substituted for the kingdom of God without manifest incongruity, and, therefore, the professing Church cannot be the kingdom of God.

If the kingdom of God is the professing

Digitized by Google

Church, and was instituted in Abraham's time, then the Jewish people had it in possession all along, and were deceived in the expectation of it as yet future. But this expectation was founded on the covenants and promises of God which spoke of it as future. See Ex. 19 : 5, 6, where, on condition that they would obey His voice and keep His covenant, God promises to make them a peculiar treasure to Himself above all people—*a kingdom of priests*. This cannot mean that He would make them His *professing Church*, for that they already were. The meaning is clear enough. It is that He would make them a glorious hierarchy of king-priests over all the earth, and subdue all to their government. In them God was making trial of the natural seed in the flesh, to show the impracticability of training them for the kingdom of God. For, as He had foreseen, they did not obey His voice nor keep His covenant, and so the promise was never fulfilled to them, though God was ready to fulfil it in every generation of their national trial, as He says, Psalm 81 : 13–15 : "O that my people had hearkened unto Me, and Israel had walked in My ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned My hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto Him; but their time should have endured forever." Their national covenant was broken in all their generations down to the termination of their trial, and, though in the terms of the covenant God had said of them : "Ye are God's (rulers), and all of you are children of the Most High, yet ye shall die like men (like Adam), and fall like one of the princes." (Ps. 82 : 6, 7.)

The kingdom of heaven, though in its glorious realization yet future, has a relative bearing to all dispensations from the beginning. The germ of it was contained in the Adamic covenant, wherein it was said to him : "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it : and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. 1 : 28.) And on his defection it was given to Christ as the second Adam, who "shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for His law." (Isa. 42 : 4.) See also Ps. 8 : 4, 8, and Heb. 2 : 6–9, where it is shown that the Dominion promised to Adam is transferred to Christ, under whom all things are not yet put, though we see Him crowned with glory and honor in His exaltation to the right hand of the Majesty on high, till His enemies be made His footstool. This kingdom was involved in the declaration that the woman's seed shall bruise the serpent's head, thus laying a foundation for the faith which was found in Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, and others of the antediluvian age, and was involved in the organic government then divinely administered over the community known as the "sons of God," in contradistinction from the Cainite faction known as the sons of men. This kingdom was typically represented by the kingdom of Shem or Melchisedek from the deluge to the days of Abraham, to whom it was given by promise : "For the promise that He should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith,—to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,—before Him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." (Rom. 4 : 13–17.) To the nation of Israel, consisting of the natural seed of Abraham, it was promised, as already shown, on condition of obedience; and, during their national trial, was included in their theocracy, until the Babylonish captivity, when God said, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him." (Ezek. 21 : 27.) The kingdom of Israel was confirmed in the family of David by an everlasting covenant (1 Chron. 17 : 9–14, and Psalm 89 : 34–37), and to Solomon God promised, on condition of his obedience, to establish the throne of His kingdom upon Israel forever (1 Kings 9 : 2–5), that is, in Millennial glory; but, as he was disobedient, the glory was not manifested, and Solomon died, and the kingdom was rent in twain, and his line

Digitized by Google

continued in possession of the minor section only until the Babylonish captivity, when it ended in the childless Coniah, and the destruction of all that remained of Solomon's seed. (Jer. 22:24–30, and 52:10, 11, 31–34.) But still the covenant insured that David should have a Son, who should also be God's Son, with whom the promise shall be fulfilled according to Isa. 9:6, 7; and when the angel of the Lord announced to Mary the miraculous conception and birth of a Son, he said, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever (that is in Millennial glory), and of His kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1:32, 33.) But the throne of His father David was not given to Him during His first advent, nor after His resurrection; and when His disciples inquired, "Wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power," or hath retained in His own right. (Acts 1:6, 7.) But when He ascended, and took His seat at the right hand of God, angels appeared to them, and told them that He should come again in like manner as they had seen Him depart. And they subsequently learned, after God shall have visited the Gentiles, in the mercy of the Gospel dispensation, to take out of them a people for His name, the Lord Jesus will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and will build again the ruins thereof, and set it up. (Acts 15:16.) And during the Gospel dispensation, the kingdom of heaven is like the grain of mustard which a man took and sowed in his field; it is in its hidden, undeveloped, unmanifested condition. It is not now seen. It is sown in the world by the preaching of the Gospel now, as it was formerly sown by the precious promises which contained it, by types and symbols which foreshadowed it, by the predictions of prophets and songs of poets in anticipation of it. And every true believer is an heir of that kingdom, and shall be a king and priest in it. But it doth not yet appear what we shall be; the world now knoweth us not, because it knew not Christ. The professing Church is known and recognized as a power in the world; but the saints, the elect remnant, are not known, are not recognized as a power of the earth. The professing Church is not the kingdom of heaven. It is only the blade, the stalk, the husk which serves for the better concealment of the precious grain. Nothing but the grain will be harvested at last; all the rest will be consumed with unquenchable fire. If it were not for the grain there would be no blade, no stalk, no husk; and if it were not for the remnant whom the Lord will save, there would be no professing Church. The professing Church and sectarian organizations are only preserved for the sake of the hidden remnant, the few names of Christ's chosen people. The Church of Sardis may count her membershlp by thousands, but there are only a few who have not defiled their garments. In every age the saints of God have been a small remnant of the professed people of God. * *

THOUGHTS ON GEN. XVIII AND XIX.

In the life of Abraham we have presented to us the life of faith (not that perfect life of faith set before us in that of Jesus "the author and finisher of faith"); but the life of one who believed God, and when called to go out, not knowing whither he went, obeyed. One, who by his obedience became separated from the fallen family of man, and though in the land promised him for an inheritance, he was in it as a stranger and a sojourner. In him we have a representative of God's elect, His chosen ones. Scripture speaks of him as "the father of all them that believe." (Rom. 4.)

In the chapters before us we have the history of God's dealings with the world (for Sodom was the world) and with the people called by His name; and, if I mistake not, this history concerned not only Abraham and his generation, but was recorded as an example to those that should come after: even for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. (2 Pet. 2:6; 1 Cor. 10:11.) Abraham's day and Noah's day are presented by the Lord Himself

Digitized by Google

as figures of "this present evil world." (See Matt. 24, and Luke 17.)

Sodom had been warned, but she heeded not the warning. She had been chastened, but she repented not, she only increased in wickedness, waxing worse and worse; her cry had become grievous in the ear of the Lord, and He said, "I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which has come unto Me; and if not, I will know."

Here at this crisis in the history of the inhabitants of the cities of the plain (bear in mind that this may be the position of our own generation), let me call your attention to these two facts, viz., there is *deliverance from judgment*, and there is *separation before it comes*. The one illustrated in the escape of Lot, the other in the separation of Abraham.

Abraham was a stranger in the land, dwelling in a tent; he had no continuing city here, but looked for one to come, "even a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11:10.) How perfect his separation from the world. How perfectly he represents the Church, the betrothed of Christ. Accordingly we find the Lord speaking in this wise, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" It is thus the bride and bridegroom are ever represented as in perfect sympathy, "My beloved is mine, and I am His." (Sol. Song 2:16.) How great, how glorious the purposes of God!

Abraham, the heavenly man, stands with the Lord Himself, and there, overlooking Sodom, they reason together. Lot is simply rescued. Abraham talks with God, is informed by Him of His intentions, and as the result of his repeated intercessions receives the promise if he find but ten righteous among its many inhabitants, for their sake it shall *not* be destroyed. We have then, I assume, in this history presented in brief the order of events at Christ's second coming to bless His people, to destroy His enemies. Let us recapitulate.

Abraham is the representative of that class of professing Christians, who, having separated themselves from the world and its illusions, wait for their Lord. They anxiously wait the cry, Behold, the bridegroom cometh. They are the wise virgins prepared to go into the marriage. (Matt. 30:1–3.) Their citizenship is in heaven, from whence they look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. They are *the children of the day*. They have kept the word of Christ's patience, and He comes and takes them to Himself, keeping them according to His word from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world "*to try them* that *dwell upon the earth*." (Rev. 3:10.) In the same book, chapters 4 and 5, we find them (before the seals are opened or judgments inflicted) seated on thrones crowned and robed in white, singing the song of redemption and anticipating a reign yet future over the earth. How come they in heaven? With them a living voice had spoken, "*Come up hither*." Many other analogous passages might be cited in proof of this, the first act of Christ, at His coming.

The second act will consist of the open visible descent of Christ with His saints to earth. John saw *heaven opened*, and Christ the Judge, under the symbol of the rider on the white horse, came forth, "and the armies *which were in heaven* followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." (Rev. 19:14.) He comes now to take vengeance upon His enemies; terror and dismay seize the inhabitants of earth: a result vastly different this from that of His first act, the gathering of His saints. "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all," etc. (Jude 14:25.) To this, His open manifestation, belong the following class of texts: Matt. 24:27–30; Luke 17:20–30; Rev. 19; Isa. 24:34, etc.

The revelation of Jesus Christ takes place while Jerusalem is suffering terrible things at the hand of Antichrist and his allies. Suddenly, like the forked lightning, "comes the Lord of hosts to fight for Mount Zion, and for the hill thereof." (Isa. 31:4; 66:15–16; Zech. 14, etc.) It is here we find the class prefigured by Lot, a spared, a delivered remnant, for there is to be such a class both among the Jews and Gentiles. See Zech. 13:7–9; 14:16. Judgment begins at Jerusalem, "For out of Zion shall go

Digitized by Google

forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isa. 2:3.) "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem." (Joel 3:16.) This is His utterance in thunder tones: "But these Mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before Me." (Luke 14:27.) The incorrigible are destroyed, those willing to acknowledge Him King of kings and Lord of lords, are preserved.

These few thoughts, suggested by the reading of the history of God's dealing with Abraham, Lot, and the inhabitants of the cities of the plain, lead me to ask, living as we are in these last days, are we living in the tent, or in the city? Is our citizenship in heaven, or is it in the world? Are we waiting for the Lord? Have we been already enlightened by His Spirit as to His mind concerning Sodom; and are we walking as did Abraham, as did holy Enoch with God? If so, then it may be soon recorded of us as it has been of the latter, "They are not, for God has taken them." God give us grace to stand among the faithful, "in the day that shall burn as an oven." (Mal. 4:1.)

O. K.

READ YOUR BIBLE.

READ your Bible, Christ is coming,
Read it earnest, read it true;
Ask His grace to understand it,
For the Gentile, for the Jew!

Read your Bible, God is coming,
Take the straightest, simplest, view;
Measure not with earthly wisdom,
Foolish Gentile, foolish Jew!

Read your Bible, Jesus coming
Bids you seek; He will imbue,
Every heart to gladly hear it,
Both the Gentile and the Jew!

Read your Bible! 'tis His choosing
Ever telling something new;
Strengthening the heavy laden.
Hear it Gentile, hear it Jew!

Read your Bible, prove, compare it
With all dross, as heavenly dew;
It will lighten every burden.
Try it Gentile, try it Jew!

Read your Bible, precious volume,
Written by a chosen few;
Mark, digest, and loud proclaim it,
To the Gentile, to the Jew!

Read your Bible, heed, and fear it,
Thoughts of evil 'twill subdue:
Tell you of your Lord and Master,
Read it Gentile, read it Jew!

Read your Bible, study closely;
Search the sacred page anew,
In each line God sends a message,
Love Him Gentile, love Him Jew!

Read your Bible, 'tis a treasure,
And He bids you guard it too,
In your heart's embrace to fold it,
Wear it Gentile, wear it Jew!

Read your Bible, guilty sinner,
On the cross He died for you,
And He gives you life eternal,
Take it Gentile, take it Jew!

Read your Bible, 'tis a blessing,
Soon you cannot dare pursue,
Ruthless hands will fiercely tear it
From the Gentile, from the Jew!*

Read your Bible, times are coming
When God's word men will eschew,
Call the Antichrist their Saviour.
Scorn him Gentile, scorn him Jew!

Read your Bible, foes will burn it,
Rend the Holy Book in two,
And you may not, must not, worship.
Listen Gentile, listen Jew!

Read your Bible, heed not isms,
Satan's schemes to mischief brew;
God will lead you from temptation.
Ask Him Gentile, ask Him Jew!

Read your Bible, proud Napoleon,
Wilful king; *can this be you?*
"Art thou he of whom I've spoken?"†
Qui vive Gentile, Qui vive Jew!

Read your Bible, Israel read it,
"Antichrist will make with you,
A covenant of seven years binding,"
Trust him *not* deluded Jew!‡

* Amos 8:11, 12. † Ezekiel 38:17. ‡ Daniel 9:27.

Digitized by Google

Queen of Britain, read your Bible.
Watch the dark, apostate crew,
Pray to God; your crown's in danger.
Guard it Gentile, guard it Jew!

Read your Bible, great Columbia,
God the righteous speaks to you!
Bids your "*wilderness* to shelter,
Fleeing Gentile, fleeing Jew!"*

Read your Bible, in the struggle,
You'll not pass unscathed through;
For "the image of the beast" will
Mark the Gentile, mark the Jew!*

Read your Bible, priceless jewel,
Heavenly gift of God to you!
Handed down through darkest ages
To the Gentile, *by* the Jew!†

YEDA.

* Revelations 12: 6, 14.

* Revelations 13: 14–17. † Romans 3: 1, 2.

Selections.

MAN'S DAY.

"IT is a small thing to me," says the Apostle (1 Cor. 4: 3), "to be judged of you, or of man's judgment." But the words translated "man's judgment" mean literally "man's day." The expression is peculiar, and the following verse shows that it is designed to stand in contrast with the day of the Lord Jesus, which, not to mention other parts of the New Testament, is again and again mentioned in the Epistles to the Corinthians as the time when the believer will be manifested, and the grand issue of his faith realized. This is man's day; man now looks at things, and judges of them by the light of his own self-will, and their relation to the present and the passing. He looks on appearances, and his judgment passes current, and is little questioned. It was thus that the Just One, the Anointed of the Father, was condemned and rejected; and those who judge according to man's day still reject Him. Judged by man's day, all the conclusions of the Word of God are reversed, the cross of Christ is foolishness, and those who go out to Him without the gate bearing His reproach, are fanatics and enthusiasts.

But in that other day, the day of Christ, the judgments of man's day will be reversed; and it must be remembered that the decisions of the day of Christ are for eternity. The Christian lives now in the light of that coming day, which shines forth from the Word of God. This light shows things as they really are, for it shows them as God sees them; and it shows them as they always will be, for it is the light of eternity. The man who lives in it sees God as the only satisfying portion of the soul; and while, for the present, he seeks all his joy in God, he is looking forward to the more perfect enjoyment of this portion in His presence for evermore. The man who lives in the light of man's day sees only the perishing things of time as a portion, and can choose no other. At the close of an earthly life, he must leave forever all of good that he knows or dreams of; in that hour his thoughts perish.

Yet it must not be supposed that those who are living in the light of man's day are necessary irreligious. They bring in religion, however, only as one of the many duties and decencies of life. They may even profess to regard it as very important; but then they think that it ought to be confined to its own time and place, like other duties. At great cost they build its temples; they observe its sacred days and hours; they respect its ministers and ordinances; they profess to reverence the Bible, and perhaps read it at set times in appointed portions. They have their stated hours of private as well as of public prayer. They may take an interest in various efforts to bring the ignorant and depraved under the influence of their Church, and may contribute of their substance to support schools and missions, as conducive to the best interests of society. In fact

Digitized by Google

no inconsiderable portion of the funds by which the church buildings, which adorn our cities and villages, are erected and maintained, and by which the religious enterprises, which are the boast of our age, are supported, is contributed by those who are living in the light of man's day. Alas! that it must be owned that those who profess to be living with that coming day in view, go down to meet the men of this world on their own ground, and court their support by countenancing their delusions. We need not pause to inquire what the religion of man's day ends in. Whatever its influence, it cannot reach beyond the day to which it belongs. Verily they *have* their reward.

But we would rather call attention to the lamentable extent to which Christians are living in the light of man's day, and are judging matters of faith and practice according to it. The result of this is the accommodation of the former to the wisdom of this world, and the conformity of the latter to the ways of this world. To say nothing at present of accommodations of doctrine to the speculations of philosophy, falsely so-called, it is very sad to observe how often in the teaching of the Church the plainest teachings of the Word of God are set aside. Worldly-mindedness is called prudence, covetousness is called foresight, and the devotion of existence to personal aggrandizement is called a laudable diligence in business. All is judged according to man's day, in opposition to Him who has said: "Seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, and live not in careful suspense. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you."

"Seeking the kingdom of God," is, in other words, living in the light of the day of Christ. And he who does so, instead of being occupied with the affairs and interests of this life, finds all his objects beyond it; and, as to present necessities, has a ground of perfect peace in the assurance of a heavenly Father's care—the care of Him who counts the number of the stars, and calleth them all by name, and who at the same time numbers the very hairs of your head. No mother's tender care ever went so far as this, and the most self-occupied man never so counted his own. But God's care of His children goes so far as this. 'He is sufficient for every exigency, great or small, and He encourages us to trust in Him for everything. He cares for us, and thus leaves us free to be occupied with Himself and the things that are above. Brethren, let us challenge our hearts in this matter. Unless we have a practical, habitual, living trust in the living God, it is vain to talk of seeking the things that are above. Now, it is doubtless true that many have obtained peace of conscience by faith in the blood of Christ, who do not enjoy peace of heart by faith in the assurance that He careth for us. Thus, even prayer brings no relief, because they are all the while judging according to man's day, and the actual dependence of their hearts is on things seen. Just as Jacob asked God to deliver him out of the hand of Esau; but showed where his actual dependence was by saying, "I will appease him by a present."

Christianity is not something which takes its place as one among the other duties and proprieties of life, to be attended to at its proper time, and then to be left out of view till that time comes around again. A man is not to be seen on the Lord's day and at Church as a Christian, and all the rest of the week in all other places as any other man. Christianity is a life in which the eternal realities of the kingdom of God are anticipated. A Christian is one who is taken off from the old root in nature, and is grafted into Christ as the new root of all his thoughts, desires, and actions. He is not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world. His relation to all present things is changed, inasmuch as his life has its proper sphere in the day that is coming, and everything must be viewed in the light of that day. If this is a practical, living reality to us, we have two things to do—"to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven;" or rather we have one thing to do, which extends over the whole of life—"to serve God;" and one hope which fills up all the future—"to wait for His

Digitized by Google

Son from heaven." Thus serving and waiting, everything is referred to God, and faith leans upon Him, leaves everything to Him, and even in a sea of trouble, rides upon the crest of the swelling wave, thence looking away in perfect repose to God, whose faithfulness is engaged to bring him to the desired haven.

How is it, my brother? Are you living in the light of man's day, or of the day of Christ?

THE VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT.

"Let the heathen be awakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about."—JOEL 3 : 13.

AT Siloam we are in the renowned Valley of Jehoshaphat, meaning, "Jehovah judgeth." The origin of this name is found in a passage of the prophet Joel, in which he speaks of the "Valley of Jehoshaphat," where God will judge the oppressors of His people. It is singular that this valley, in three of the great religious systems of the world, should be designated as the scene of the last great judgment. The Jew here looks for the appearance of Messiah and destruction upon his enemies. On yonder terrace wall of Mount Moriah, that overhangs this valley, the Mohammedan will tell you his Prophet will sit to judge the world; while from yonder summit of Olivet the Saviour ascended to Heaven, and many believe that on this spot He will descend, and that before Him the nations will be gathered. Well is this wild ravine called the "Valley of Decision." Jews, Mohammedans and Christians all agree in the propriety of the present name. Jerusalem, what a place thou hast in the religious faith and affections of the world!

The head of the valley is on the north side of Jerusalem, and at first very shallow. As you descend the valley to the southward, and come opposite to St. Stephen's Gate, the depth is about one hundred feet, and the breadth about four hundred. Here, a little to the northward as you cross the valley, nestling under the shadows of the steep declivities of Olivet, is one of the sacred spots embalmed in the memory of every Christian, and to which we are yet to pay a formal visit—Gethsemane. As you continue down the valley, along the Temple area, it rapidly deepens and the hills rise in steep precipices on both sides. Passing the Fountain of Siloam, the valley again widens, the pleasant gardens and cultivated terraces make their appearance; and near by, in strange contrast, "Tophet and black Gehenna," called "the type of hell."

The length of the valley, from its head to En Rogel, or its junction with Hinnom, is two and three-fourths miles. It then cuts its way through the wild, hilly country of the wilderness of Judea, past the convent of St. Saba, where it is called the "Monk's Valley;" below the convent it takes the name of the "Valley of Fire," until it terminates at the Dead Sea, fourteen miles from Jerusalem. Such is the valley that now has an undying name in the records of our holy religion. "A valley," says one, "which has witnessed on its banks the greatest scene in the evangelical drama—the tears, the agonies and the death of the Saviour! A valley through which the prophets have passed, in their turn, uttering a cry of woe and terror which seems still to echo! And we may say, a valley from the banks of which the Saviour ascended to be again with His Father; and a valley which, in the estimation of many, is destined to hear the stupendous noise of the torrent of souls rolling before God, and coming to their fatal judgment." . . .

Jehoshaphat, like Hinnom, is a great sepulchral valley. Just under the east wall of the city, the Mohammedans have a cemetery, and a large extent of ground is thickly covered with their singular-looking tombs. Here, under the shadow of the great Mosque of Omar, the Mussulman covets a tomb. On the opposite side of the valley is the great silent city of the Jewish dead. Here, since the days of David and Solomon, generation after generation have been gathered unto their fathers. For thousands of years bones have been piled upon bones, and the dust of the children has been mingled with the ashes of their forefathers. The whole of the east bank, all along up the side of Olivet, is covered with the tombs of the countless descendants of Abraham. It is still said to be one of the greatest privileges craved

Digitized by Google

by the dying Jew, to have his bones laid in the sepulchral home of his fathers in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. Here they expect their coming Messiah to stand in the resurrection. Those buried in this valley, they say, will rise at once from their tombs; while those who have been buried in other lands will have a long and weary underground pilgrimage to make to reach this place.

The good and the brave, the mitred priest and the sceptred king, may here have sought a secure and quiet resting-place; but their secret chambers have been laid open, their costly sarcophagi dashed in pieces, and their dust scattered to the winds of Heaven. There is no secure hiding-place but in Him who says, "I am the resurrection and the life." Standing in Him while we live, entombed in Him when we die, we may banish our anxieties about the fate of the frail tenement of clay. It may sleep in the deep, dark caverns of earth, or be inhumed in the fathomless waters of the mighty deep, or be burned and scattered like the dust of the summer threshing-floor; it shall not be lost; the eye of Omniscience will watch over it; it shall live again and live forever.

Editorial.

TIME TO AWAKE.

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."—Rom. 13:11, 12.

Night and sleep usually go together. The one was made for the other. And when united and used as God has designed, both are beautiful and good. One of the most touching figures expressive of God's kindness to His people, is that where it is said, "*He giveth His beloved sleep.*"

But there is a night which has no beauties, and a sleep which has no blessing in it. There is a moral and spiritual night, and a moral and spiritual sleep, which it would be well for man if he had never known. The one consists of ignorance, depravity and misery; the other of obliviousness, unconsciousness, self-satisfaction, and inactivity in what relates to God, eternity and the soul.

When a man is ignorant in sacred knowledge—having no just conceptions of God, of Christ, or of what respects our moral relations—to whom the subjects of revelation are unknown, unappreciated, imperfectly understood, and still more feebly felt—a darkness is in him. He walks in shades. Obscurity broods over his mental nature. He dwells in night.

You see a man of rude morals—in whom principle is not the governing motive—a man led on by mere passion, ambition and lust. He may have some good traits, wrought by the pressure of circumstances, but he has no fear of God before his eyes. He has no love or submission to the Lord Jesus Christ, in which alone true morality is to be found. His strongest impulses are all selfish and sinful. He finds it much easier to swear than to pray, and can find much more pleasure in the impure jest, the vulgar amusement, the social glass, than in that holiness without which he can never see God. Men like him may admire him, but when viewed in the light of sobriety and truth, the halo around him is dark. He is enveloped in the gloom of night.

And all who live in this night, are occupied with the proper business of night. They are *asleep*. Forgetfulness is upon them. The sleeping man recollects nothing. He thinks of nothing. He is for the time a blank. And so it is morally with all those who are under the shades of spiritual night. They have forgotten God. They think not of His terrible majesty, or of His matchless goodness. All the mighty subjects of Revelation are as nothing unto them. They remember not what has been threatened against sinners, nor what has been promised to saints.

They are *insensible*. The sleeping man has

Digitized by Google

no consciousness, no feeling. You may call, but he does not hear. You may hold things up to him, but he does not see. You may touch him, but he pays no attention. And so with these spiritual sleepers. Divine things make no impression upon them. They are deaf to the calls and blind to the exhibitions of the Gospel. We preach to them, but they pass it by as nought. Providence lays hold upon them, but still they do not recognize the hand of God. They are plied with a thousand means, but they give no response and exhibit no signs of effective impression.

They are *self-secure*. A man will not sleep where he apprehends serious danger; and when he does sleep, his very sleeping is a cessation of solicitude in regard to his safety. And so it is with all unsanctified people. They have no idea of the danger they are in. They show no symptoms of concern for their safety. Though treading on the brink of hell, they manifest no anxiety, no alarm. Though liable any moment to be plunged into eternal perdition, they do not seem to see it. No serious apprehensions affect them. They are *asleep*.

And like what often happens to sleepers, they are also living an unreal life—occupied with vague fancies—dreaming bright and sunny things that nowhere exist. They see happiness where there is no happiness. They cry peace where there is no peace. They are filled with pleasant hopes where there is no room for anything but fearful apprehensions. They imagine that they are achieving the true end of life, whilst they are courting everlasting death. They see what is not, and see not what is. Their whole apprehension of things is unreal —utterly unfounded in truth. Their vision is not right vision. They do but *dream*.

If a sleeping man does anything, he does only foolish things. He has no proper reflection, and no considerable adaptation of himself to the things around him. There is no balance in the working of his faculties. The stories related of somnambulists and somniloquists are both comic and tragic, but never according to what a man in his right senses would do. The same is also true of spiritual leepers. They do not consider. They act as from some strange and unaccountable infatuation. And at best they do but act their silly dreams. They are the dupes of the folly and delusion of their own diseased imaginings. Some of their senses may be open, but not all of them. They may know there is a God and a judgment, but they do not seek His favor, or proceed at all as a rational consideration of their responsibilities would dictate. Their conduct is all that of sleep-walkers, and not that of men truly awake to things as they are.

Sleeping people, again, are always pleased and satisfied with their condition while asleep. They dislike to have their slumbers interfered with. If they are only left undisturbed they are content. "Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep," is so lovely to them, that they desire nothing to be intermixed with it, and for the time they want nothing else. They grumble at being aroused from it. They will even quarrel with the light that comes in at their windows to summon them from its embraces. And just so it is with such as are under the stupefactions of sin. They like it. Their moral somnolence is something that they relish. It relieves them of so many weighty cares. It brings them so many pleasant dreams. It furnishes them so much quietness on things which trouble other people. They are loth to be disenchanted or disturbed. They grumble at the servants whom God sends to call them up. They talk gruffly at the summons to arise, and turn over to court another nap. They have strong piques against the Bible for the light it throws in upon them to rouse them from their carnal tranquillity. They are bent upon avoiding the cares of day and wakefulness as long as possible. They will not arise until they are made to feel that there is no other alternative left. And even after they have been forced to break their slumbers, they will sit swaggeringly upon the sides of their beds, and rest their hands clumsily upon their knees, and think wistfully after their broken dreams, and it is a great chance if they do not lean on the first thing that presents itself, and sleep again!

Such is the condition of those souls that have not risen up to be true and faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Night is upon them. They

Digitized by Google

have not the light of spiritual truth shining in their hearts, nor the light of well-ordered affections illuminating their lives, nor the light of lasting pleasure or immortal hope to cheer their march to eternity. And as they are in darkness, so they are asleep. All their spiritual senses are locked, or moved only with pitiable eccentricity and delirium.

Nor is this true only of the grossly vicious, the skeptical and the profane. It is equally true of every one, in any station in life, who has not wholly given up to be a servant and disciple of Christ the Lord. He that wallows in filth, and the cultivated worldling who boasts upon his good breeding, and superior intelligence—he who denies the Scriptures and takes refuge in downright unbelief, and he who acknowledges Christianity only to neglect its duties—he who cares not for his God, and he who means to repent but never does it, and every man, woman and youth not diligently engaged seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness—all alike are in a spiritual condition just such as above described. The inactive, dreamy, delirious, sleepy tenants of spiritual darkness are neither scarce nor hard to be pointed out. That church member who would rather hear a song than a sermon, or prefer to attend a dance to a meeting of the saints around the Saviour's feet, is one of them; and he who dislikes to be pressed with the claims of practical godliness is another; and the churches, and the streets, and the theatres, and the highways are lined with them, and no observer can mistake them. Nor is it unlikely that some of them will read this.

Friend and brother, a new year of the Church and of Divine grace, has dawned upon you. It also brings a special message with it, direct from the Spirit of God. That message is, "*that now it is high time to awake out of sleep.*" "Wherefore He saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. 5 : 14. Awake—cast off the works of darkness—put on the armor of light—walk honestly, as in the day—put on the Lord Jesus Christ—live for another life,—such are the inculcations now again addressed to every one of us.

A spiritual sleeper ***awakes***, when his senses open to his situation,—when he begins to see, and learn, and know what a lethargic and unsatisfactory life he has been leading,—when he commences to realize what a slothful servant, and what a guilty and faithless being he is in the sight of God. The Prodigal *awoke*, when he came to himself, and saw his wretchedness, and thought of the father he had wronged, and said he would arise and go to his father, and confess what a sinner he had been. The Publican *awoke*, when a consciousness of his crimes so overwhelmed him, that he smote upon his breast and cried for mercy. The base multitudes, on the day of Pentecost *awoke*, when they were pricked in their hearts by Peter's charge of the wickedness they had done, and cried out to know what they must do. And we shall awake, as the Apostle here admonishes, if we set ourselves to a review of our ways, learn our many defects, and come to a more decided and earnest mind with regard to the great things of our souls.

An awakened spiritual sleeper casts off the works of darkness, when he solemnly and honestly abandons his careless and evil ways, and determines no longer to walk with the wicked, or to remain in his indifferent and prayerless ways of life. When the man who has been overcome by his appetites dashes from him his cups, absents himself from the society of the drunken and the lewd, and sets his heart upon being a decent man and a Christian;—or when the unpraying man begins to call upon God, and to live as a man ought to live;—or when he who has been betrayed and caught by any of the many snares of the devil, confesses his guilt, and from henceforth is resolved to be found no more in such associations and such crimes;—then it may be said of him, that he has cast off the works of darkness.

An awakened spiritual sleeper puts on the armor of light, when he enlists and arrays himself as a good soldier of the Lord. What that armor is, the same Apostle elsewhere tells us. To take unto us "the whole armor of God," that we may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand, we must have our "loins girt about with truth," have on "the breastplate of righteousness," our "feet shod with the

Digitized by Google

preparation of the Gospel of peace," take "the shield of faith," wherewith to quench the fiery darts of the wicked, and "the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," and pray always with all prayer and supplication. The three thousand on the day of Pentecost put on this armor, when they received Peter's exhortation to repentance, and were baptized, and contined steadfast in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers.

An awakened Christian sleeper walks honestly, as in the day, when he need not be ashamed of what he does—when he so orders his life that he need not fear to have all his habits known. Rioting, drinking, lewd behavior and thoughts, strifes, envyings, or the indulgence of bad passions of any sort, are all incompatible with this walking honestly as in the day. Ah, these nights, and these screened places about our cities, have records, which if told out, would cause the head of many a one who would be considered respectable, and even pious, to drop, and fill many a bold face with confusion. But any doings that we could not bear to have told before others, is not walking honestly as in the day.

And an awakened spiritual sleeper puts on the Lord Jesus Christ, when he takes shelter in Him as his refuge from deserved condemnation, and seeks to live Christ's life, and by faith in His Gospel clothes himself with Christ's righteousness. The Colossians had put on Christ, when they had risen with Christ, and had set their affections on things above, and became dead to this world, and had their life hid with Christ in God.

Such, then, is the spirit and import of these apostolic inculcations. Shall they be heard and heeded, or not? They are all greatly needed by every one, and by some so much needed that there is very great danger of utter shipwreck of faith if they be not heeded. Shall we not, then, take them to heart, and start this year of mercy with a new life? And if any are at a loss for motives, the Apostle abundantly supplies them.

"It is high time to awake." So many years and privileges spent to no better effect, is an argument of overwhelming force, not to trifle for the future as many have trifled in the past. If twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years of grace have passed with no better results than some can this day show, what hope is there that such will ever get to heaven without a vastly different way of dealing with sacred things than that which has characterized them hitherto? What reason can there be for allowing things to drift on for another hour as they have been drifting for these years that have gone? Averaging the ages of all our readers, it may be safely said that two-thirds of the very best time to become what we ought to be have passed away. For many it is already the ninth and eleventh hour of the day. Short, very short, and liable to be cut off any instant, is the space yet remaining wherein the opportunities of salvation are accessible. Is it not, therefore, "high time to awake out of sleep?"

"The night is far spent." This night time of our world will soon be over. There is a day *coming in* which the unsanctified and the unprayerful shall not be able to stand. The chariot of God's judgment, which is to sweep all the unholy to their deserved perdition, is already in motion. Who knows but this shall be the last year of grace this side of the coming of our Lord? Shall we then let it come in and go by without an effort to make our calling and election sure?

"The day is at hand"—the day of final deliverance for the suffering saints—the day when He that shall come will come, with power and great glory, to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. A little while, and then shall be fulfilled the prayer, which He has taught us, "Thy kingdom come." Any of these passing nights the shout may go forth from the sky, at which the very dead shall rise, and the day dawn which shall have no more night. Shall we not, then, bestir ourselves, and so live and pray that we may be ready for it? O, if it were to overtake some with no more preparation than they now have, what would become of them? And yet there is no guarantee whatever that it will not so overtake them, unless they at once repent, and change their careless ways.

Digitized by Google

"*Salvation is near*,"—the means of it are near. It is ready to become the consolation of all that will awake and put on the Lord Jesus. It is 1800 years nearer to its consummation than it was when the Apostles were on earth. It is half a lifetime nearer than when you begun to live. It is another year nearer than it was in the last advent season. And the year that we are now entering may be the last before that consummation shall come. And how is it possible for us to realize these things without being moved, as we never heretofore have been? Let the world think of us what it will; let the godless sneer, and point at us the finger of scorn, and talk of us as foolish and weak; let others risk it to go on as they always have done, not caring for God or His judgments; but let us not suffer ourselves to be laughed out of our salvation, or cheated out of eternal life, to have a little of this world's deceitful favors. Heaven is the proper goal of our being. To that let us look. For a place there let us live and labor and suffer. And, whatever this new year of grace shall bring, let us make sure that it brings us closer to God, and arouses us more to the importance of the things of eternity, "Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep.".

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

A VENERABLE friend sends us an extract from the *New York Observer* of September 3d, in which the editor speaks of a visit to the Shakers in Columbia County, N. Y., and says of these deluded people:

"I have not a doubt but you will be as surprised as I was to find that Shakerism is composed of Millenarianism and Spiritualism. It is built upon the twofold idea that the Lord Jesus Christ has made His promised second appearing already in the homes and faith of the Shakers. They have also constant communication with the unseen world by spiritual manifestations. These people are Millenarians. They take the prophecies of Daniel and others; the 'time, times and a half;' the '2300 days,' the '1260 days,' the '1290 days,' the '1336 days,' and they add and subtract, and bring out '1747,' the date of the beginning of Shakerism, just as clearly and correctly as Father Miller ciphered out 1843, or any other modern prophet ciphers out 1868, or any date he wishes to fix for the second appearing of Him who has Himself forbidden us to know when He is coming. The Shakers believe He is now present in them, and that it is high noon of the Millennium all around here."

Upon this our correspondent justly remarks: I have long since ceased to wonder at any fabrication which partisan zeal and prejudice could pen down, and attempt to palm off upon the world as truth. But I must say that I had supposed the editor of the *Observer* incapable of doing this thing. I know he has occasionally gone out of his way to sneer at and slur Millenarians. One of two things must be true,—either he is profoundly ignorant of the great subject, or he has, while writing, entirely forgotten the ninth commandment; for there is not in the above account of Shakerism, as given by himself, the first element of the great Bible doctrine of the Millennium, as held by the worthies of all antiquity, from the time of Enoch, the seventh from Adam, down to near the close of the third century of the Christian era; nor as held by the Reformers in the days of the rainbow angel; nor as held by the great body of Millenarians of the present day.

"The Shakers believe" what? that "He, Christ, is now present *in them*." Can it be possible that the editor of the *Observer* mistook this for Millenarianism? Why it is his own Whitbyan theory of an invisible spiritual reign, after his expected conversion of the world takes place, and for the one thousand years! whereas the great and glorious Bible doctrine of the Millennium is this: the visible personal coming of the Son of Man in glory, the resurrection of the holy dead, the judgment of the living nations, the full establishment of His kingdom, and the commencement of His universal and everlasting reign on the renewed earth, and in the midst of a redeemed race. This involves the perpetuity of the earth, for it "abideth forever," as the covenant of day and night can never be broken, nor the ordinances of heaven annulled; for He hath established them

Digitized by Google

to be forever, and also the continuance of the race "for perpetual generations."

Besides, the editor of the *Observer* is equally uncandid and unjust in his implied attempt to associate "Father Miller" with Millenarians. There is but one point of agreement between Miller and his followers and Millenarians, whereas there are many points of agreement between them and the sneering editor's theory, as can readily be shown. J. D. P.

THE WORLD WHEN CHRIST COMES.

It is clearly set forth in the Scriptures, that the return of Christ to judgment will find the world anything but holy, peaceful, Christian, and happy; and that the last days will be earth's worst days, crowded with all forms of abounding wickedness, apostasy, irreligion, disorder, and sensuality. Indeed, it is one of the uniform laws of Providence, that judgment never comes in a pure and peaceful age. It is only when the blasphemies of men run highest, that the Almighty strikes. When the wickedness of the old world culminated, the flood came. When the iniquities of Sodom were at their height, the day of doom dawned. When "the iniquity of the Amorites" was "full," the sword of Israel was upon them for their extermination. When the Jews, to their many crimes and apostasy, added responsibility for the Messiah's blood, the ploughshare of destruction overturned their city, destroyed the last remnants of their state, and entailed eighteen centuries of woe upon their children. The greatness of judgment is also always graduated by the extent and turpitude of the offences which call it down. And as all Divine judgments, hitherto, have been samples and earnests of the great judgment to come; and, as that when it comes, is to be the most universal and awful of all, we are forced to the conclusion that it will overtake the world in a condition of unbounded guilt and godlessness, transcending everything that has thus far marked the history of man.

To this, also, agree all the Scriptural statements on the subject: "*When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?*" (Luke 18:7–8.) "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man." (Luke 17:26–27.) We know what sort of days those of Noah were. We know that they were not centuries of righteousness and peace. The testimony of God certifies to us what was the state of things. The inspired record is, that "*God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth*, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . *The earth, also, was corrupt before God;* AND THE EARTH WAS FILLED WITH VIOLENCE. And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt: *for all flesh had corrupted His way upon the earth.*" (Gen. 6:1–13.) Such is the awful portrait of those times, sketched by the Holy Ghost Himself. And the word of the divine Jesus, more than once recorded, is: "AS THE DAYS OF NOE WERE, SO SHALL ALSO THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN BE." (Matt. 24:37–39.) We know, too, from the same infallible source, what was the moral estate of the cities of the plain, at the time they were overwhelmed. "The Lord said: 'The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and *their sin is very grievous.*'" Not ten righteous men could be found in all their teeming populations. (Gen. 18:20–32; 19:1–17.) But the word of Jesus is: "*Likewise, also, as it was in the days of Lot;* they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all: EVEN THUS SHALL IT BE IN THE DAY WHEN THE SON OF MAN IS REVEALED." (Luke 17:28–30.) Paul testifies to the same effect: "This know also, that *in the last days* PERILOUS TIMES SHALL COME. *For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.*" (2 Tim. 3:1–9.) And if this correctly portrays what is to be the prevailing condition of the professing Church, what shall be said of the vulgar multitudes who make no pretensions to piety or godliness?

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VII. FEBRUARY, 1869. No. 2.

Special Contributions.

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH.

(Continued from page 5.)

BEARING in mind that the two Treatises under consideration agree in the error, that the kingdom of God is the professing Church—the one house under two administrations, from the days of Abraham till the end of the world—we will proceed to examine the next error, as stated by Mr. Lord, and tacitly implied in Prof. Hengstenberg's theory, viz., that the kingdom of heaven, or the professing Church of the Gospel dispensation, was offered to the Jews in the ministry of Jesus, and, by them, in their judicial blindness, rejected.

Mr. Lord says: "Our Saviour first offered to the unbelieving but covenanted Jewish nation, in its judicial blindness—or, which is the same thing, to the professing, but wholly corrupt and apostate Jewish Church—which, hitherto, was His only visible Church on earth; not the Davidic and temporal kingdom, which they had expected, and which had been promised to them, of which He was to be the Theocratic Head, but of which, in their sins, they were, as yet, unworthy; but His spiritual kingdom only, and that only on account of their sins, upon conditions which were as repugnant to their ceremonial self-righteousness as it was to their infatuated worldly hopes and expectations." The distinction here drawn between the Davidic and temporal kingdom, and His spiritual kingdom, is fanciful. The Scriptures speak of but one kingdom under the phrase "kingdom of God" or "kingdom of heaven." This kingdom is heavenly, and spiritual, and glorious; characterized by peace, and righteousness, and joy. This distinction is made to obviate some difficulties arising out of the previous definition, that the kingdom of heaven is the professing Church; but the difficulties are not thereby obviated, but rather increased: for, now, it follows that the kingdom of God is not only His spiritual kingdom, or professing Church, but, also, the Davidic or temporal kingdom; and, with this twofold definition, the difficulties of exposition are increased in proportion, and absurdities meet us at every step. For, if the Jewish nation was then Christ's only visible Church on earth, then, the Jewish nation, as the professing Church, was the spiritual kingdom of heaven; and the amount of the paragraph is, that Christ offered the professing Church to the professing Church, and on such conditions as were repugnant to the degenerate professing Church. And further, on page 21, the phraseology amounts to this: that the professing Church shut against themselves the graciously-opened door of the professing Church; and, on page 23, that the meaning of Matt. 21:43, is, that the professing Church should be taken from the Jewish nation—considered as the Jewish Church—and given, not to the professing Christian Church, but to Christ's elect Church, or chosen remnant; all of which is solecistical in the extreme, and demonstrates the erroneousness of the definition that the kingdom of God is the professing Church.

The other definition, if we leave out the word "temporal," viz., the Davidic kingdom, meaning thereby the future reign of Christ, when the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall order

Digitized by Google

it, and establish it, with judgment and with justice, from thenceforth even forever, is a correct definition of the kingdom of heaven. It was indeed this that the Jews expected; and expected, because, as we have shown, it was promised to them in the national covenant which God made with them at Sinai; promised on condition of their keeping the covenant and obeying the law, but which they brake in all their generations, through the period of their national trial, which did not terminate until Christ came and was personally rejected by them, and crucified. Until then, the Sinaic covenant was in force, and its promise of the kingdom and glory still valid on condition of obedience. It was this promise Christ came to confirm in its actuality, had they received Him. It was this kingdom which was at hand in the readiness of God to fulfil the promise to them, had they proved worthy. This kingdom was theirs, conditionally, by the national covenant, but forfeited by their disobedience, and, therefore, taken from them in the abrogation of that covenant. This is illustrated by the parable (Matt. 22: 1–10) of the marriage of the king's son. They were the invited guests. Their national covenant was the standing invitation. At the time of Christ's personal manifestation in the flesh, the wedding was ready —the kingdom was at hand to be set up. But they proved unworthy by their wicked conduct; and the wedding is postponed until suitable guests can be furnished by the issue of invitations to others in their stead. The result of their national trial was a demonstration of the impracticability of training a nation, in natural flesh, to be the kings and priests of the kingdom of heaven, and proved, that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight. It was in this relation, and from this position, they were nationally rejected—rejected from being "a kingdom of priests" in natural flesh. Hence it is said that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." But their national rejection, on these grounds, did not affect their relation, individually, to the covenant of grace in Christ Jesus. It did not exclude them from either the means or ends of grace. On the contrary, the commission of the Gospel ministry includes all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Instead of "blindly shutting against themselves the graciously-opened door" of the Christian dispensation, "and its graciously-offered and free salvation," that door was largely and most effectually opened to them on the day of Pentecost, and has never been closed against them. Their national disobedience forfeited to them the covenanted exaltation, in the flesh, over all the earth, and their repudiation, in that relation, is final; but, they are not thereby shut out from the blessings of the Gospel. They are not only called by the Gospel to the "obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ," they were the first to be called; for Peter said to them (Acts 3 : 26), "Unto you first, God having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." And many thousands of the Jews believed, and constituted the first Christian churches before the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles. And had they ALL believed, the Gospel would not have been preached, as now, to the Gentiles at all; for through the fall of the unbelieving Jews, salvation is come to the Gentiles.

It was not then, what Mr. L. calls "Messiah's spiritual kingdom," or the "probationary relation under the present Gospel dispensation," which was taken away from Israel or the Jews. In this he is altogether mistaken, and is at variance with the testimony of Scripture, which shows that the Gospel calling is, in virtue of the Abrahamic covenant, to the Jew first. Hence, Paul and Barnabas said to them (Acts 13 : 46 :), "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." The calling of the Gentiles was consequent upon Israel's unbelief, just as the invitation of other guests to the marriage of the King's Son was consequent upon the unworthiness of those first bidden. The Jewish nation, or Israel after the flesh, is represented by the first bidden guests, and does not include the remnant who believe, and who are distinguished as the election which God foreknew. There was always such an election out of every gen-

Digitized by Google

eration during their national trial, and there is such an election still, who are the "Israel of God," who, being of faith, shall obtain the kingdom; and the rest are blinded.

Mr. L. traces this blindness to a sentence of judicial condemnation God pronounced upon Israel, by the prophet Isaiah, twenty-six hundred years ago, and which, he supposes, involved a "continuous process of hardening, with God as the principal and efficient cause, the message (or sentence), the mediate cause, and the prophet the ministerial cause," thus attributing the blindness of succeeding generations to God as the principal and efficient cause, in the execution upon them of a penalty for the wickedness of Israel in the days of Isaiah. This view of the case is strongly put by the grouping together of a few passages from Isaiah's prophecy and the New Testament, making it appear very plausible, but by no means proving it. No such imputation of wrong to God can be admitted, for His ways are equal, and all His judgments are just. The first passage from Isaiah, ch. 1:2–15, is adduced to show the wickedness of that generation as the reason for the sentence; and yet there is really no connection between this arraignment of the nation for their sins, and the so-called judicial sentence in the sixth chapter; on the contrary it is followed by an exhortation to repentance, with the assurance, that "though their sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." It is therefore a mistake to suppose that it is a conviction pressed to judgment. But in the ministry of the prophets, and in his dealings with Israel, God had all the day long, through the whole term of their national trial, stretched out his hand to a disobedient and gainsaying people. Hence, they heard, but understood not; they saw, but perceived not: and in the vision of the sixth chapter, Isaiah is commanded to tell them that the effects of their conduct would be to make their hearts gross, and their ears heavy, and their eyes sticky, so that they could not see with their eyes, nor hear with their ears, nor understand with their heart, nor be converted and healed. And the result would be their captivity and the desolation of their land, though they should be preserved and restored again for the sake of the holy seed, or elect remnant. This prophecy had reference, primarily, to the Babylonish captivity, which took place about one hundred years afterwards. And in this captivity of the people, and desolation of their land, they were divinely chastened for their good, and their hearts were humbled so that they acknowledged their sins and sought after God, who restored them in His mercy, and gave them such favor in the sight of the heathen that they assisted them in their return to their own land, and in rebuilding their city and temple. "And the children of Israel, which were come again out of the captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the Lord God of Israel, did eat, and kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel." (Ez. 6:21, 22.) Now this does not seem as if they were "abandoned alike of God and man;" or that they were at the time under a "continuous process of hardening, with God as the principal and efficient cause." This was about two hundred years after the supposed sentence of judicial blindness was pronounced upon them, and disproves the assertion of Mr. L., that the sentence "ever afterwards hung over Israel."

The facts, in their case, are that from their national organization and the institution of their trial under the Sinaic Covenant, "they were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works and served their idols," etc. Therefore, was the wrath of the Lork kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance. And He gave them into the hand of the heathen, etc. Many times did He deliver them; but they provoked Him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. Nevertheless He regarded their affliction when He heard their cry. And He remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the multitude of His mercies. He made them also to be pitied of all those that

Digitized by Google

carried them captives. (Ps. 106: 35–46.) It was their national characteristic to hear and not understand, to see and not perceive; and to become sensual, indifferent, blind to spiritual things, and to go on in their sins until they were visited by punishment; and "when He slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and inquired early after God." The sixth of Isaiah is only a prediction of one of those fatal relapses into apostasy from God, and their recovery again through the discipline of punishment. The same thing occurred during the ministry of Christ. There was a refulfilment of that prophecy in the moral state of the people. They heard, but understood not; they saw, but perceived not; their heart was gross, their ears were dull, their eyes were closed. They were without spiritual perceptions. The truth did not convert them, it only enraged them. The more they understood of Christ's doctrine the more they hated Him. They showed that they could not bear the truth. Hence, He spake to them in parables, not to conceal the truth lest they should understand and believe; but because it was the only method of reaching their minds without arousing their passions. It is monstrous—it is blasphemous to suppose that His intention was to speak so as to be misunderstood, lest they should be converted and healed. On the contrary, in Mark 4:33 it is said, "with many such parables spake He the word unto them, *as they were able to hear it.*" For the same reason Christ withheld many things from His disciples (John 14:12), though to them, in general, it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, inasmuch as they received the same with a childlike spirit. For the same reason Paul fed the Corinthians with milk and not with meat. (1 Cor. 3:2, 3.) For the same reason Paul and others were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. (Acts 16:6.) By the parables He gave them as much of the truth as they could bear, and sometimes pressed it home upon them until they were ready to stone Him. So sensual and depraved had they become, that instead of profiting by his ministry they continued to persecute Him, and at last consummated their national guilt by His crucifixion. Hence, the wrath is come upon them in their national rejection, dispersion, and tribulation.

The blindness, in part, which has happened to Israel, is consequent upon their continued adherence to the abrogated Sinaic covenant, in expectation that the Messiah will yet come in the flesh, and exalt them to the headship of the world. In this, their table—their covenant—has become "a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompense unto them;" and their eyes are darkened, and their back is bowed. This blindness *has happened* to them. It is not the effect of a "continuous process of hardening, with God as the principal and efficient cause." It is the effect of their own continuous adhesion to their national covenant since the termination of their national trial. And it will continue until the fulness of the Gentiles, or the Gentile complement, necessary to make up for the defection of Israel and complete the elect Church, be come in; and, therefore, to the end of the present dispensation. But this blindness is only in part, it is not total. In all centuries of this dispensation there have been some of Israel who have believed. In proportion to the whole, there may be as many saved of Israel as of the Gentiles. The blindness of the Gentile mind is perhaps as deep as the blindness of the Jewish mind. Even in the professing Christian Church, especially since the apostasy, and the revelation of the mystery of iniquity, there is an almost total eclipse of faith. And the present state of the world, political, moral, and religious, is fearfully portentous of the approaching end.

It is, therefore, erroneous to suppose that the Jewish people are under some fatal sentence of judicial blindness, of which, God is the principal and efficient cause; and which effectually hinders their conversion to the Christian faith. The difficulty in reaching their minds and touching their hearts arises from another cause. The veil is on their heart because of their adhesion to their national covenant. And yet, an Apollos "mightily convinced the Jews and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ." And Paul "expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them

Digitized by Google

concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets—and some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not." After this manner they may still be reached and convinced of the truth. After this manner there is yet a remnant saved according to the election of grace. **

MINISTERING ANGELS.

"And another angel came and stood at the altar having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."—Rev. 8: 3, 4.

Is not this a beautiful, and poetic idea; our very prayers wafted on angels' breath to the throne of God, and purified as it were from every earthly contact by the conjoint incense from the golden altar of sacrifice, perfumed and sweetened from all dross, a meet offering for the pure ear of the Holy Son of God; plainly showing us, that were it possible for angels to act as intercessors between God and man, such heavenly beings would not have needed any offering, being all purity themselves. They were simply God's ministering spirits of love, in the pleasure of obeying His will. Our angel-spirits guarding the outpouring utterings of our hearts to the Lord! What a thought is here! How lovingly the children of God are tended, we can scarcely realize. Oh, how truly thankful we should feel to our Maker for all this watching and nursing of our souls, helping us to endure the toils of a sin-burdened, weary world, and giving us occasional glimpses of what we shall be —

When the battle-strife has passed,
And the noisy din is o'er;
When hand in hand with Christ we walk,
On Canaan's happy shore.

Thrice happy are we if we keep God's commands, for then are we the friends of God. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." (John 15: 14.) Who amongst us then would change for the friendship of the world? for it is enmity to God, and all holy things. Its pleasures bring neither life, joy, or peace; its treasures, where can we place them that "the moth and rust doth not corrupt," or where that thieves cannot break through and steal? In Heaven there is no alloy mixed with the gold of our riches Our jewels are set in the bright radiance of God's love, dazzling the soul of the believer with the perfection of its pure and holy beauty. Wake up! unconverted man, you know not what you are losing, you, bound down with anguish and despair. There is a rest awaiting, weary one; come buy, without money and without price. God's grace is plenteous, He showers it on those He loves, and you may have it if you will only "come unto Him that you may have life." He is a precious Saviour, only try Him. Are you weak? He will make you strong. Are you sickly? He will cure you, for "He doeth all things well." Are you hungry? He will give you "of the bread of life." Are you thirsty? "He will give you living waters, that beneath His altars flow." Do you wish to be cleansed? "He will wash you in His blood, white and pure from all sins." Are you naked? He will clothe you with "His garments of meekness and purity of spirit." Will you partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb? "the Spirit and the Bride say, come, and let him that heareth say, come." Come, guilty one, Christ is coming. He willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and be saved; He will wipe away all your tears. May he in His infinite mercy knock at the door of your heart and find entrance there. Dear Christian friends, we never can have too much of a good thing; we never can have enough of Christ; repetition is often tiresome and grates harshly on the ear, but blessed be God, the repetition of His grace never wearies. We want it, not measured sparingly, but good measure, heaped up to the brim, running over. Our hearts do welcome it, refreshing and soothing our weak natures, and removing the briers of sin and the tangled weeds that beset our path in this life, and paving the way for our walk with Christ in Heaven. And as we walk here, so will our road be without turning above. "But to which of

Digitized by Google

the angels saith He at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool; are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Is not this an indisputable proof of the presence, *i. e.* the invisible presence, of angels ministering to us. Here, we have no abiding city, therefore these kind guardians, ever in their spiritual presence, incite us to do good and to avoid all evil, by resisting, through the grace of God, that arch tempter, Satan, and never permitting him place in our hearts, dedicated to God alone, prompting us to be instant in prayer when we feel disposed to sin, as our frail natures will. Let us not forget to bow before His throne to obtain mercy, and find grace in the time of need. (Heb. 4:16.) We can never fail to find a ready friend in God. He may not answer our prayers as we wish, but "the Spirit always maketh intercession as God wills, for He knoweth His will and pleaseth Him in all things." (Rom. 8:26, 27.) Spirits, and angels, and messengers, are synonymous. Talking of little children, our Lord says: "For their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven;" *i. e.*, their messengers, or spirits, meaning their guardian spirits or angels. Angels surely cannot be hurt by coming in contact with the world, as a sinful being cannot approach the Father, much less gaze on His glory. Thanks be unto God, our last enemy—which is death—when destroyed, will be the means, through the merits of our Saviour, blessed forever, of allowing our then purified earth to breathe again, free from sin, the home of God's own true people forever. Are we praying? are we longing for the near approach of our Saviour? Signs tell us He is coming; the winds and the waves warn us He is coming; and there is a feeling in our hearts that He is coming; and every believing soul vibrates with joy at the thought. Jerusalem, dear city of peace, are you preparing for the reception of your King? Will you spread your garments, and strew branches in the way for His holy feet? "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." (Zechariah 12:10.)

Gracious Father, hear thy children!
Open wide the pearly door
Back upon its golden hinges;
Lift the azure netted curtains,
Hiding Christ, our loved Redeemer,
Rend the envied veil asunder:
We are watching, we are waiting,
With no holy zeal abating;
Give us grace, to bide thy coming,
Cherished Saviour, evermore!

JEDA.

STRANGE PHENOMENON.

WITH reluctance I send you the following, almost as strange and significant as that of the giant figure seen waving its hands over the Isle of Man, town of Douglas, some time ago, recorded by you.

The event below narrated, occurred a year ago last October; place, near Crescent City, Iowa, five miles above, or north of, Council Bluffs, on the great Central and Northwest Railroad.

As the married daughter of my senior elder, with her husband, were walking homewards in the dusk, down or along said railroad, she suddenly looked up, and cried to her husband, "Look!" When *both* clearly saw a large host in the sky—infantry first, cavalry in the rear—all keeping time to the slow martial tramp. They soon quickened their speed to a "double-quick," and then vanished in a rushing *cavalry charge!* They were followed by an imposing figure of a general on a *snow-white horse*, bringing up the rear. All these figures were quite distinct, and all, but the latter, quite dark. Their course was southwest, toward "Salt Lake," and must have been seen some minutes, as the parties hastened down the railroad to call others to witness this very unusual sight, but the fierce "charge" took the army out of sight too soon.

I had this account from the lips of the woman, myself, and cross-questioned her after the

Digitized by Google

manner of witnesses in court. She is perfectly reliable, and is certain it was no optical illusion. "Any one could have seen it." There were no clouds; and the haze, in the dusk, was the ground on which the army moved. She considered it a sign of coming events. What, no one can tell.

R. B.

WOODBINE, HARRISON CO., IOWA,
December 10th, 1868.

Selections.

NAPOLEON AND EUROPE.

THE military preparations of France have become the wonder of the age. Nothing like them has been known since Xerxes invaded Greece. The hosts of William the Conqueror would not be missed out of the military array of Napoleon III. The great Russian campaign of 1812, has been always looked upon as the mightiest event of modern times. It is the standard of comparison whenever military movements are the theme. But the Third Napoleon transcends the First in the vastness of his preparations as much as in the profoundness of his policy. He has acted for years with that consummate prudence which superficial men have mistaken for imbecility. He allowed Denmark to be broken up by Austria and Prussia, for well he knew that the two plunderers would quarrel for the spoil. He remained silent and passive, that all things might take their course. Austria and Prussia quarrelled for the Danish spoils, and Austria was defeated and laid low. What has been the result? That Austria has now become the vassal of Napoleon, and in place of resisting his ambition, will only be too happy in sustaining it. Austria, which was, at all times, the enemy of the First Napoleon, has become the humble ally of the Third. Has not the Imperial policy been wondrously carried out?

Again: had Napoleon marched to the Rhine a few years ago, he would have been destroyed; for Austria would have joined Prussia against him, and every man in Germany would have taken arms for the honor of the Fatherland; besides, his ambition would have been so conspicuous, that even England and Russia might have joined in a European coalition. But now it is far otherwise. Austria hates Prussia far more than she dreads Napoleon; and the Danish question affords the French Government an excuse for war, which no one can controvert. Napoleon is not marching to the Rhine; he is only assisting Denmark; or, rather, carrying out the Fifth Article of the Treaty of Prague. That Fifth Article was inserted by himself, with the express object of providing himself with an excuse for a war with Prussia. Now he has a perfect right to assist Denmark, and a still further right to insist on the fulfilment of a treaty. He does not make war for the Rhine, but for this Treaty of Prague. Half of Germany will be on his side; the other half indifferent. He will have nothing but Prussia proper to contend with, and France is more than a match for all that Prussia can bring into the field. On his way to Prussia he will have to cross the Rhenish provinces, and if he take possession, it will only be the accident of war—not by malice prepense—so that he will gain all he wants, with the additional honor of being the patron of the oppressed, and the vindicator of treaties. In all that has hitherto occurred, he has shown, to the utmost extent, some of the most powerful qualities of human character—patience, silence, and precaution. Not the vulgar silence of the tongue, but the majestic silence of the heart. A fool can hold his tongue, but he can never hold his heart. He has been mocked and ridiculed by the English press as the dupe and plaything of Bismarck. He has been represented and caricatured as begging for scraps, and being repulsed even in his humblest request. He has been hated and almost hooted by his own subjects. He has been described, by our own shallow press, as weak and wavering—as superannuated and worn out. He has endured all

Digitized by Google

obloquy with that majestic silence of the heart —the silence of great deeds—the silence which belongs only to great men. Little men can neither practise nor comprehend it.

But what has he been doing amidst this cloud of silence? Like the cloud-compelling Jupiter, he has been gathering up his thunderbolts. Woe be to those against whom they shall be launched! He has raised his army to 1,300,000 men. He has exercised his troops in all the evolutions of war. He has trained them to night marches and night attacks. He has hardened their frames by exposure to all weathers—by encampment in the open fields at all seasons—by incessant yet judicious exercise. He has taught them to be familiar with darkness; to take in the twilight like the lions of the desert; to move with order and rapidity amidst the gloom and confusion of midnight. For that most perfect and most powerful of machines—a Napoleonic army—he has provided an equally perfect and powerful arm. He has completed his new rifles, leaving a million in reserve. He has completed his new artillery, and, still more wonderful, he has kept its secret.

Another engine of destruction has been produced under the immediate directions of the Emperor. It is called the "Mitrailleuse." By means of this engine, a single soldier can discharge fifty musket-balls per minute, each ball being effective at one thousand seven hundred yards—about an English mile. If we combine the "Mitrailleuse" with the new guns, and the Chassepot rifles, we shall find that silence is not imbecility, and that the Emperor Napoleon has not been silent in vain. He has expended his strength, not in empty words, but in pregnant deeds. He has been silent that he might the more secretly prepare, and, above all, that he might preserve the fatal secret of his engines of war.

He has succeeded; and we believe the day to be at hand when the ridiculed and superannuated monarch will burst upon Europe with one all-withering blaze of power. The dull, dark thunder-cloud will, in one instant, quiver with insufferable light. We make no pretensions to infallibility, but we believe the thunderstorm to be at hand.

THE SUN AND MOON.

Galignani's Messenger (Paris) says that the sun's disk is at present riddled with holes, or spots, one of which is of very considerable size. It is a deep cavity in the photosphere, and so wide that the whole terrestrial globe would find room in it without touching the edges. There is another spot which, though much smaller, still has one of its diameters as large as that of our earth.

The *Public Ledger* (Philadelphia) says: Professor Winloch, of Harvard University, reports that he has seen a volcano in active eruption in the moon during the nights of December 1st and 2d. During the past year, astronomers have differed in opinion as to the disappearance of the crater Linnæus, marked on the best charts of the moon's surface till 1868. The destruction of this crater, if it should be the case, is stated to be the first evidence of actually observed changes going on at the surface of the moon. The observations of Professor Winloch would seem to confirm the conclusions of other astronomers on this subject. The foreign journals announce that Professor J. H. Madler, of Bonn, who is celebrated on account of the moon charts prepared by himself, has written a letter on this subject. Madler has been for many years nearly blind, but the disappearance of the crater Linnæus interests him as well as other eminent astronomers.

ALIVE TWO THOUSAND YEARS.

In the course of his wanderings among the pyramids of Egypt, Lord Lindsay, the celebrated English traveller, accidentally came across a mummy, which the inscription upon it proved to be two thousand years old. In examining the mummy, after it was carefully unwrapped, he found in one of its inclosed hands a small round root. Wondering how long vegetable life could last, he took the little bulb from the mummy's hand, and planted it in a sunny soil, allowed the dews and rains of

Digitized by Google

Heaven to descend upon it, and in the course of a few weeks, to his astonishment and joy, that root burst forth and bloomed into a beautiful flower. This interesting incident suggested to Mrs. S. H. Bradford, an American poetess, the following verses upon

"THE RESURRECTION."

Two thousand years ago a flower
Bloom'd lightly in a far-off land;
Two thousand years ago its seed
Was placed within a dead man's hand.

Before the Saviour came to earth,
That man had lived, and loved and died,
And even in that far-off time,
The flower had spread its perfume wide.

Suns rose and set, years came and went,
The dead hand kept its treasure well;
Nations were born and turned to dust,
While life was hidden in that shell.

The shrivelled hand is robbed at last,
The seed is buried in the earth;
When, lo! the life—long hidden there—
Into a glorious flower burst forth.

Just such a plant as that which grew,
From such a seed when buried low;
Just such a flower in Egypt bloom'd
And died two thousand years ago.

And will not He who watched the seed
And kept the life within the shell,
When those He loves are laid to rest,
Watch o'er their buried dust as well?

And will He not from 'neath the sod,
Cause something glorious to arise?
Aye, though it sleep two thousand years,
Yet all that buried dust shall rise.

Just such a face as greets you now,
Just such a form as here we wear,
Only more glorious far, will rise
To meet the Saviour in the air.

Then will I lay me down in peace,
When called to leave this vale of tears,
For "in my flesh shall I see God,"
E'en though I sleep two thousand years.

Editorial.

DANIEL AND HIS PROPHECIES.

Introductory Observations.

Pains have often been taken to make believe that we know almost nothing of Daniel, the author of the Book of Holy Scripture which bears his name. It has not been because ample records are wanting on the subject, but because men have been very anxious to get rid of them. Gibbon once said, "The stubborn mind of an infidel is guarded by a secret incurable suspicion." And it is this "incurable suspicion"—this shutting of one's self up against the admission of the truth—this foregone conclusion against the possibility of miracles and prophecy—that explains the reason that some men find no information about "Daniel, the prophet." The truth is, we know more of him than we do of Adam, Noah, or Job; as much, as of Joseph, Isaiah, or Herod the Great; and nearly as much as of Moses, David, or St. Paul.

Three Daniels are spoken of in the Scriptures: one, a son of David, born in Hebron, of Abigail the Carmelitess, referred to in 1 Chron. 3: 1; another, a son of Ithamar, who went up with Ezra after the Babylonish captivity, and of whom we read in Ez. 8: 2, and Neh. 10: 6; and the third, the great Daniel, the prophet of God, who wrote one of the most remarkable and important Books of the inspired Canon.

This Daniel, with whom alone we have here to do, was descended from one of the highest Jewish families, in the last period of the Hebrew monarchy. He was, almost certainly, of royal blood, born at Jerusalem. He was among the captives whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away from Judea to Babylon, at which time he was a boy not over fourteen years of age. Of all the Jewish youths thus transported, he was the foremost in every quality and attainment of body and mind. He was without blemish, skilful in wisdom, cunning in knowledge, understanding science, and having ability in him; which, with his royal blood, soon secured for him an election for service in the King's palace. For three years he was put under special train-

Digitized by Google

ing for court duty, under the charge of the Babylonian eunuchs. It had been prophesied by Isaiah to Hezekiah: "Of thy sons which shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the King of Babylon" (Is. 39: 7). The inference is, that in Daniel was this prediction fulfilled, and that in suffering and privation he was formed for the place in which he became so conspicuous and notable. His name, also, was changed, partly as a badge of servitude, partly to obliterate the memory of his early home, but principally, that he might forget the God of Israel and become a servant of Nebuchadnezzar's god.

Still, though living among an idolatrous people, put into a school of idolaters, named after an idol god, and serving in the court of an idolatrous king, Daniel never became an idolater. From childhood he had been instructed in the knowledge and law of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, his fathers, and from those teachings he never departed. When but a boy of fourteen, he refused to be persuaded to eat of the king's meats, because they were connected with idol-sacrifices, and were not prepared in accord with Jehovah's law. And so vigorous was his youthful faith, heralding in its simplicity his future greatness, that he trusted in God to uphold his health and strength by pulse and water, quite as well as through the stronger but forbidden food. He was from the first persuaded, and on this persuasion he ever acted—an abiding model for all young men—that abstinence from sinful indulgences is the only sure way to real prosperity in the end. In that faith he succeeded beyond all his heathen companions when a youth. And in that faith he continued and prospered, from the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, through all the changes of empire, and all the extraordinary trials of his high place, down to Cyrus. From early youth one of the judges of Babylon, president over all the colleges of its wise men, and head of the heads of all the sections of the empire; amid all the intrigues indigenous to Oriental despotisms; amid all the envy toward a foreign captive as a counsellor of royalty; amid all the troubles incident to the king's seven years' insanity, and the murder of two of his successors; amid all the varied changes of the kingdom and its monarchs; he maintained an unbroken political greatness of seventy years, preserved his integrity untarnished, and outlived envy, jealousy, and dynasties. Honored during forty years of Nebuchadnezzar's reign; intrusted with the king's business under the insolent and sensual Belshazzar; owned by the conquering Medo-Persians; the stay and earthly protector of his people during the dreary years of their exile; the writer most likely of the decree of Cyrus giving leave for their return to the land of their fathers; a worshipper of the true God in the most dissolute and degraded as the most grand of the old heathen cities, his life presents one of the rarest pictures the world has ever beheld—a living poem of faith and greatness more eloquent than words.

Four times, outside of the Book of Daniel, is this distinguished man referred to by name. He is twice mentioned by Ezekiel; once for his pre-eminent godliness, and once for his transcendent wisdom. In the one instance, the word is: "Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, . . . though, Noah, *Daniel*, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness" (Ezek. 14: 13, 14). In the other instance the prince of Tyre is charged with the presumption of professing to be "wiser than *Daniel*" (Ezek. 28: 3). And the Saviour himself is twice said to have referred to him in full acknowledgment of his eminent character as a servant and prophet of God (Matt. 24: 15; Mark 13: 14).

The *Book* of Daniel is quite as remarkable as the life of its author. "Daniel," says Jerome, "not only, as do other prophets, writes that Christ should come, but also teaches at what time he should come, and arranges the kings in order, and numbers the years, and announces the most evident signs." But for this very reason he has been assailed, and the most extraordinary attempts made to impeach his prophetic character. The natural heart dislikes certainty and definiteness in sacred things. As long as they are left in the mist, capable of

Digitized by Google

being turned and twisted into harmony with any system that may be invented, people are quite willing to have them pass for Divine; but so soon as they become fixed, and fasten down upon definite events and dates, the character of which can no longer be doubted, then the proud heart rebels, its lurking unbelief is detected, and the superior clearness and certainty of the thing is made an argument for the rejection of it as not Divine. This was the ground upon which Porphyry, in the third century, assailed the inspiration of this book; and the same is the staple of argument on the part of troops of rationalistic critics in modern times.

But, we have no quarrel with the Book on this score, and consider it very unreasonable that any one else should have. We accept and hold it, from beginning to end, as it stands in the Canon, as the production of the great Daniel of the captivity; and by no possibility the work of any other man; and as, at the same time, an inspired Book, unerring in its history, and infallible in its predictions—yea, one of the noblest and most important individual sections of the Word of God.

It is agreed on all hands, that the Book of Daniel is from one writer. Its style, language, structure, and the interior dependence of one part on another, prove that it was composed by one mind, and proceeded from one author. And, as the production of one author, it is impossible, from the nature of the contents, the languages employed, the perfect mastery of facts and their minutiæ, and the exactness of allusions which could not have been known by any one in the time to which some have assigned the composition of the work, that it could have been written by any other than the very Daniel whose history it gives, and who so often in the course of the narrative claims to be the seer and actor whose life and visions it records.

It cannot be successfully disputed, that this Book was received into the Canon of the Old Testament, as the authentic and sacred work of the Daniel of the captivity, which Canon was regarded as complete long before the time of the Maccabees, to which skeptical critics would refer it. With all the scrupulousness of the Jews, as to what they admitted into the catalogue of their sacred Books, there is no instance in which they ever classed the Book of Daniel with apocryphal writings, or doubted concerning its authenticity or inspiration.

Josephus witnesses that this Book of Daniel was in existence in the time of Alexander the Great, that it was shown that conqueror in Jerusalem by the high priest as one of the prophetic Books of the Jews, and that it told that a Greek should destroy the Persian Empire, and that Alexander was encouraged by it to undertake his Eastern expeditions, and was so pleased to learn what he had ascertained from it, that he agreed to grant to the Jews whatever favors they might desire of him. (*Antiquities*, B. xi, chap. viii.) This account is corroborated by other historic facts, viz., that Alexander was at that time personally in Palestine, that he had an interview with the high priest and others, that the Jews voluntarily surrendered to him, and that he did treat them favorably. Yet all this occurred more than a century and a half before the time of the Maccabees.

But above and beyond all this, is the testimony of the Lord Jesus himself. In Matt. 24:15, he says: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation *spoken of by Daniel the prophet*, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth let him understand) then," etc. In Mark 13:4, the same is again recorded: "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation *spoken of by Daniel the prophet*, standing where it ought not (let him that readeth understand)," etc. The Saviour here recognizes Daniel as a true and real historic personage, the same as Moses, Isaiah, or David; He distinctly ascribes to him the character of an inspired and worthy prophet of God; He also refers to him as the author of a book, quotes from it as well known, and commands and admonishes that special attention be given to what is thus prophetically contained in that book. The world knows of no other "Daniel the prophet," and of no other Book of Daniel the prophet, to whose records to give special heed, or which speaks of such an abomination as that to which the Saviour refers. But we

Digitized by Google

do know, that this very Book of Daniel was in existence in the Saviour's time, that it was then received and held by all as one of the sacred Books, and that it does speak of the very thing to which the Saviour refers. He must therefore have had this Daniel, and this Book, in His eye. Either then, this Book of Daniel is an authentic and inspired production of the man of whom it speaks, or the Saviour was misled and mistaken. And if the Saviour was in error, he was not God, nor a reliable prophet of God; and the whole system of Christianity must go by the board as a delusion and a cheat! The whole religion of the Bible thus stands or falls with this Book of Daniel. Deny its authenticity and prophetic character, and you strip Christ of all claims to our confidence, and leave no ground for faith at all. And when the matter comes to such a pass, it is time for a criticism, which would fain call itself Christian, to hide its face, and confess that it has sinned before God and man, in attempting to make believe that this great and holy Book is a forgery, and unworthy of our regard.

Nor will it answer to bring in half-way proposals, to the effect that it was written by some other Daniel, and that its object and tendency were good, though feigned and its facts overstated. Either it is Divine and true throughout, or it is an insufferable imposture, and an immoral and untrustworthy thing throughout. If another Daniel wrote it, he was a consummate liar, upon a most frightful scale, and in a line of particular aggravation. Even the heathen had better ideas of morality than to allow such forgeries in the name of God as lawful means of edifying His people. And then, to make the Saviour himself connive at and sanction such a cheat, is irremediably fatal to his claims as the Son of God, and to Christianity as the religion of God.

The original Book of Daniel is written in two distinct languages. The first chapter, and the first three verses of the second, are written in Hebrew. From chapter 2, verse 4, to the end of the seventh chapter, it is written in Chaldee. The eighth chapter takes up the Hebrew again, which is continued on to the end.

We have seen it stated that "it is now utterly impossible to ascertain the reasons why one portion of this Book was written in Chaldee and another in Hebrew." But this is a misstatement. The reason for the use of the two languages is plainly inferable from the nature of the subjects. Where the language is different, the central subject is different. The early history of Daniel and his companions, is a part of the history of God's people, and so it is written in their national language. It is Hebrew. The account touching Nebuchadnezzar's forgotten dream, its interpretation, and the historical matters following, had reference to the world-powers, and the affairs of the empire. It related to God's dispensations to the heathen; so also Daniel's first vision, which supplements the revelation in the king's dream, expands it, and fills it up. These therefore are given in the world's language, that which was chiefly employed by the Babylonians, and understood from the Persian Gulf to Damascus. What comes after the seventh chapter, relates also in part to the world-powers, but only as they stand connected with the people of God, the coming of the Christ, and the setting up of his glorious kingdom. The centre is different from the other instances. Hence the common language of the prophets is resumed, and what mainly concerns God's people is written in their own language.

There is thus a distinct and ascertainable principle, at once beautiful and just, upon which these different languages are employed. What relates specially to the world and its empires, is given in the language of the then great head of those empires; and what relates specially to the Divine kingdom and its adherents, their trials and triumphs, is given in the sacred language of the chosen people. Thus, even in its remote external accidents, the Book of Daniel suggests the broad and everlasting difference which exists to the eye and mind of God between His own people, and the common world with which they are in contact. The whole thing argues one author to the Book, and that author not only versed in knowledge and languages as only the Daniel of the captivity was, but also in profoundest internal accord with the spirit of prophecy and the mind of God.

Digitized by Google

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

"There shall be earthquakes in divers places."—MATT. 24 : 7.

"The sea and the waves thereof roaring."—LUKE 21 : 25.

"Fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven."—LUKE 21 : 11.

THE attention of the world is being forced to the contemplation of very startling phenomena, of late, in the shape of earthquakes, tidal waves, etc. Disturbances of the earth, and of the tides of the sea, and of the course of nature, on an unprecedented scale, have been the subject of excited tidings from all quarters of the globe. Editors and scientific men have been led to pronounce upon them as among the most remarkable and extensive of which there is any written record. They have been experienced at short intervals during the past two years, and especially the last four or five months. It is also believed, by those most knowing on the subject, that the last of this cluster of gigantic commotions have not yet been felt. Later and fuller details are continually increasing, and commanding an unusual degree of interest among scientific men.

A secular paper remarks:

"In both hemispheres, but especially on this continent, and among the adjacent islands, these visitations of tornadoes, floods, and earthquakes, with their tidal waves, and fissures emitting gas, fire, smoke, steam, and boiling water, are becoming alarmingly frequent. Last autumn they had them all in high revelry at St. Thomas and the neighboring islands, and such terrific hurricanes of rattling hail along the southern frontier of Texas as was never known there before, back to the first occupation of the country by the Spaniards. This year the line of operations of these celestial and subterranean phenomena appears to be (with the recurrence of the meteors) along the Pacific side of the continent, and may be traced to the late disastrous convulsions of the dry land and the sea along the western coast of South America. Violent storms follow in the track of earthquakes, and such storms doubtless result from the derangement of the atmospheric equilibrium by the disturbing gases and electrical forces arising from these subterranean outbreaks."

The first of this great, and more recent, series of convulsions, so far as our intelligence now extends, occurred in the Sandwich Islands, eleven days before the terrible disaster in Peru. Violent shocks were felt in different parts of the group from the 2d to the 9th of August, accompanied with heavy storms of thunder and lightning. The western coast of South America was devastated by awful earthquakes from the 13th to the 15th of August, and at the same time the shocks were felt again in the Sandwich Islands, though less severely than before. On the 17th there were shocks in New Zealand. About the middle of September shocks were felt by vessels in the Eastern Pacific. On or about the 1st of October they were experienced again in the Sandwich Islands. In California they were felt from the 21st to the 25th, with considerable severity, and were repeated slightly up to the 6th of November. On the 23d of October we hear of earthquakes in Ireland. On the 4th of November there was one at Vancouver Island.

The shocks have followed no particular direction, and been confined to no particular quarter of the earth. Beginning in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, they seem to have affected all its eastern shores and its southern and western islands, and, skipping the whole breadth of the North American Continent and the Atlantic Ocean, to have broken out in Ireland. We may yet learn that the remoter countries of Asia have likewise been shaken.

The tidal waves, which have accompanied all the most serious of these convulsions, are peculiarly interesting subjects of study. It has been remarked, as an evidence of the rapidity with which they travel, that they reached the California coast as early as the morning of the 14th of August, having moved over a distance of four thousand miles in a little more than fourteen hours. But it now appears that their speed is even greater than this, for they were felt in the Sandwich Islands, nearly an equal distance, on the evening of the 13th, only *four* hours after the earthquake in

Digitized by Google

Peru, lasting through the night, and obtaining their greatest force the next morning, almost simultaneously with their appearance on the opposite California coast. This would give them a velocity of about a thousand miles an hour.

A great tidal wave fell upon Hawaii, one of the Sandwich Islands, on the 15th of October, destroying a great many houses and other property.

Something of the terribleness of these tidal disturbances may be better understood from the letters of eye-witnesses and sufferers. The British Vice-Consul at Arica, exclaims:

"Gracious God, what a sight! I saw all the vessels in the bay carried out irresistibly to sea (anchors and chains were as packthread), probably with a speed of ten miles an hour. In a few minutes the great outward current stopped, stemmed by a mighty rising wave, I should judge about fifty feet high, which came in with an awful rush, carrying all before it in its terrible majesty, bringing the whole of the shipping with it, sometimes turning in circles, as if striving to elude their fate."

A writer from Lima, says:

"I saw the whole surface of the sea rise, as if a mountain side, actually standing up. Another shock, accompanied with a fearful roar, now took place. I called to my companions to run for their lives on to the Pampa. Too late! With a horrid crash the sea was on us, and at one sweep—one terrible sweep—dashed what was Iquique on to the Pampa. I lost my companions, and in an instant was fighting with the dark water. The mighty wave surged, and roared, and leaped. The cries of human beings and animals were dreadful."

The New York *Sun*, of November 19th, expresses itself thus:

"Such a universal pother in the bowels of the planet was never known before in human experience. Wicked men of science have, it is true, been profane enough to say that the primeval hell beneath earth's ribs was fast cooling, when it wasn't; and this may have led to the late demonstrations, although one is sorry to attribute vindictive feeling to so august, wise, and venerable a body astronomic.

"Certain it is that a great rebellion has taken place for some cause or other, and that the earth has been shaken from centre to circumference. So far from there being any decrease of vigor in the igneous energies, they are more active than ever. Etna, and Vesuvius, and Hecla—that pretty toy of the Icelanders—are henceforth to be set down as among the prettiest fireworks of the creation, and have been completely shorn of what used to be considered their grandeur and sublimity, by the tremendous rock-rendings, and oceanic fires, which have made the Pacific islands so famous and so terrible. All over the globe, as by a general conspiracy and premeditated simultaneous movement, there has been a regular Walpurgis hellabaloo, and fiery dance of destruction and death. Vesuvius and the Tahitian volcanoes roared to each other at the same moment in voices of primeval thunder, across the immeasurable brine, which writhed with a new and unheard of agony, wrecking great ships in its wrath, and swallowing their ruins like so many grains of sand."

On the 8th of December a fresh eruption of Etna broke out. The mountain became enveloped in smoke, and exploded at times with deafening detonations. The streams of lava swept over the surrounding country, and the ashes from the crater were blown into the streets of Messina.

On the 12th of December, the ship Isaac Jans, from Port Townsend, when a few days out from Acapulco, encountered three fearful tidal waves, filling all aboard with consternation. If the ship had not been with her head on, she would undoubtedly have foundered. Like accounts are multiplying upon us with almost every foreign mail.

Now, it is but natural, right, and wise, for intelligent and thinking men to inquire into the meaning of all these commotions in earth, air, and sea. They furnish a vast subject for science, and also for the theologian and Christian. There is particularly one relation of these things which no man, with the Bible in his hand, should overlook; and that is, that THEY HAVE BEEN PREDICTED by the inspired writers, and by the Lord Jesus Himself, again

Digitized by Google

and again, AS THE FORERUNNERS OF THE DAY OF JUDGMENT. People may laugh and sneer as they please, but *God hath spoken on the subject;* spoken plainly, spoken repeatedly, and given the assurance that these are the signs by which we are to know that the end of this age is near at hand.

"Earthquakes in divers places," "the sea and the waves thereof roaring," along with other marvellous coincidences, are unmistakably described in the Scriptures as God's warnings of the nearing day of His coming to judge the earth. Nothing can well be more positive and definite than that fearful irregularities in the realm of nature are to herald the "day of the Lord;" and that Christ's coming will transpire in a time specially marked by startling occurrences. Nor does it alter the nature of the case, to allege, that there have been earthquakes, storms and commotions of the sea and sky in other ages, or that they may be accounted for on natural principles. God knew what nature is, and by what laws she is governed, when He pointed to manifestations in her economy for indications of the fulfilment of his purposes. And when, as now, the most intelligent investigators and observers, by figures and dates of history, prove to us that "these upheavings of the earth are *greatly increasing in number and violence*," and assuming a character of universality and terribleness never known to have been heretofore, there certainly is just reason to begin to conclude, that He who made these predictions knew something about them, and that the great events with which He has connected them as the harbingers, are really not far off.

The day, the month, the year, we may not know; but *the signs* we may know, and see, and feel. And "when these things begin to come to pass," the command of the Saviour to His people is, that they draw from them certain conclusions, and "*know* that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand." Luke 21: 31.

"And yet," writes one of our correspondents, "the great mass of mankind are utterly regardless of all the solemn warnings which these upheavings of the earth are thundering into our ears. There are scoffers who mockingly exclaim, 'Where is the promise of His coming, for all things continue as they were from the beginning.'" The Church abounds with evil servants, who say in their hearts, My Lord delayeth his coming, and are smiting their fellow-servants, and are eating and drinking with the drunken. Learned doctors, acknowledging the frequency and terribleness of these visitations of God, yet refer to them as capital jokes, and fit subjects for witticism. Many mockingly allude to 'the shaky condition of the globe,' and make light of these awfully solemn things. Though the Almighty has given it as a sign of His Advent, that '*there shall be earthquakes in divers places*,' and even secular men, caring but little for what Christ in his word has said, are being moved by what is occurring, yet there are those who call themselves Christians, who can close their eyes, and pass it all as a matter of unmeaning merriment. Alas! Alas!

"But whatever careless and worldly-minded Christians may say, and do, in regard to these mysterious doings of God, if we love the Lord Jesus Christ, and desire His coming, and believe that He has given us any sign by which to know that His coming is near, these late terrible 'earthquakes in divers places,' must be viewed as signs that the day is at hand. Blessed also, is he that will regard them as the noise of the chariot wheels of the coming King. Our duty is, to watch and pray, knowing that soon He that has promised to come, will come and will not tarry. For He will surely come. He has promised to come. God has said that He will come. Angels have come from Heaven to give assurance that He will come. The Holy Ghost in the hearts of Prophets and Apostles has taught that He will come. And everything in and around us augurs that His coming is near. Let men take warning, and be prepared to meet their God."

A NEW WITNESS.

A SOCIETY, called "*The London British and Foreign Second Advent Publishing Company*," has recently been formed; and is now issuing a paper called "*The Watchman of Ephraim*." We are not informed as to the parties at the head of it; but the following extract from the

Digitized by Google

Prospectus will be read with pleasure by all earnest believers in the doctrines we advocate in this Serial:

"At no period of the world's history have there been such accumulative indications of some mighty and momentous change impending over the nations as at the present moment. There is a palpable tremor of anxiety and expectation passing over the whole aspect of the religious, moral, social, and intellectual world, closely resembling that undefined dread which appears in the faces of people who watch the gradual development of the signs of an approaching earthquake. The religious world trembles from centre to circumference with a strange excitement, and unconcealed dread of change. Doctrines, rituals, creeds, ceremonies, all clash and jostle together in a manner resembling the vibrations which pass through human dwellings and material constructions which lie immediately over the seat of volcanic action, giving sure indications of a rapidly approaching upheaval. In the moral world, ancient standards and landmarks are already thrown down, and Pagan theories of spiritual wives and other sensual devices and practices are regarded not with regret and dismay, but with toleration. In the intellectual world, the human mind runs riot in the wildest speculations. In the material world, there have been earthquakes many, and wars, and rumors of wars, little and great; to say nothing of that extraordinary uprising which is only now subsiding in the Western Hemisphere—of that Titanic contest which, as regards the vastness of the theatre of operations, and the gigantic waste of blood and treasure which flowed from it, far surpassed everything which the world has ever witnessed in the same space of time; to say nothing of the late sharp and decisive conflict in the centre of Europe, which rolled the smoke of battle up to the gates of Vienna, and at one blow swept away half the dominions of an ancient empire.

"To say nothing of these accomplished facts and significant signs of the times, the most advanced nations of the world at this very moment stand surveying each other in an attitude of watchful solicitude, as if expecting the opening of some magnificent drama, improving their implements of war to the very verge of destructive perfection, probing the sources of their wealth and strength, and carefully ascertaining and husbanding their material resources, as though preparing for an awful and final contest. At such a crisis it is the solemn duty of every true Christian to use all energies, efforts, and means to prepare men's minds for the evanishment of an era which is now so plainly closing up, and the approach of the new and better Dispensation. It is an awful consideration that tens of millions are now entombed in gross darkness upon these glorious doctrines. So largely did the prophets dwell upon them, with all the accompanying glories, that the Jewish nation was led to fix its exclusive attention on these predictions, and totally to overlook others which declared that Christ was to suffer before he was to reign.

"The holy apostles, in their writings, continually urge the second appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ as the present motive to enforce all their exhortations to holiness of heart and life. Our Blessed Lord's own discourses, moreover, are full of this subject. Nearly all His parables have reference to it. His admonitions to the disciples to watchfulness and prayer are founded upon it.

"We feel, moreover, at this momentous epoch, the most solemn conviction of the speedy closing up of this age; and that if all who love our Saviour, and look and wait for his glorious appearing, were brought to a unity of mind on this great question, it would go far, under God's blessing, to awaken the careless and worldly multitude.

"For the diffusion and defence of the great truths of the Gospel in these days of abounding heresy and infidelity, it is the incumbent duty of all who are loyal to the standard of the Cross to use the mighty power of the 'press' for the glory of Christ and the good of souls—the vindication of the near Advent of the Lord. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this sacred doctrine. It is pre-eminently the doctrine needed, with an army of teachers by press and pulpit, to give consistency and completeness to other truths most surely believed among us."

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VII. MARCH, 1869. No. 3.

Special Contributions.

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH.

(Continued from page 21.)

THE Treatises under consideration differ in the views taken in regard to the future of Israel and the Church: and, first, in their expositions of Matt. 21: 43. Mr. Lord says, "The nation here referred to does not mean, as is sometimes loosely supposed, the Gentile nations, in distinction from the Jewish nation. Neither is it meant that the kingdom of God, or the Messiah's spiritual kingdom, should be taken from the Jewish nation, and given to all nations indiscriminately, Jew and Gentile alike, considered as one nation; either then, or at any time during the progress of the present dispensation. The meaning is, that the Messiah's spiritual kingdom should be taken from the Jewish nation, considered as the Jewish Church, Christ's only visible church on earth hitherto, but now hopelessly apostate, and given, not, as might at first be supposed, to the professing Christian Church at large, under the present Gospel dispensation, but to Christ's elect Church,—His chosen remnant according to the election of grace, chosen out of Jews and Gentiles both; chosen out of all nations, and all generations, all kindreds and tribes and tongues, Jew and Greek, Scythian and barbarian, bond and free." The fault in this paragraph is contained in his erroneous definition of the kingdom of heaven, viz., "Christ's spiritual kingdom or professing Church," which, on page 20, he says, Christ offered to the Jewish nation, and here he says was taken from the Jewish nation, and by which the whole becomes jejune and solecistical: for if the professing Church be the kingdom of heaven, then the Jewish nation as Christ's only visible Church was the kingdom of heaven; and his statements mean that Christ offered the kingdom of heaven to the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of heaven was taken from the kingdom of heaven: and given, not, as might at first be supposed, to the kingdom of heaven at large, but to Christ's elect Church. Again, this statement is in effect a denial of his own definition that "the kingdom of heaven is Christ's spiritual kingdom or professing Church, under its present earthly form and manifestation, throughout the whole course of the present Gospel dispensation;" for, if the spiritual kingdom be not given to the professing Christian Church, the professing Christian Church is not the kingdom of heaven. And his statement disproves his definition, which is thus shown to be an egregious error.

Prof. Hengstenberg says, "Our Lord designates the descendants of the patriarchs, 'sons of the kingdom,' *regno proximi*, those to whom the kingdom of God primarily belongs. Stiff-necked impenitence must of course end in the loss of these prospects. The Lord saith, in Matt. 21: 43, 'Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.' This 'people' is the true Israel, the 'election' mentioned of Paul, into which the believing heathen are brought by affiliation." But, by the true Israel, he means the Israelitish believers who constituted the Christian Church at the first, and to which the believing Gentiles were subsequently added. So that his view is, that the kingdom of God is the professing Church, existing as an election in the Jewish nation before Christ, and continued in the

Digitized by Google

Christian Church since; which amounts to the very opposite of Mr. Lord's view, that the kingdom of God is not given to the professing Christian Church at large; though it accords with his definition of the kingdom of God; and involves the same absurdity of exposition: for the words of Jesus do not import the continuance of the kingdom through the elect believers, but imply that it belonged in some just and proper sense to the Jewish nation, and, on account of their unworthiness, should be taken from them, and given to a nation qualified for it, and prepared to bring forth the fruit thereof.

The kingdom of heaven, taken from the Jewish nation, was that promised to them in their national covenant, on condition of their obedience, and, according to the admission of Mr. L., that which is to be given to Christ's elect Church. From Ex. 19: 5, 6, Deut. 14: 2, and 26: 18, and Ps. 81: 13, 15, we learn that it was to make Israel a peculiar treasure to himself above all the nations and people of the earth, that they might be to him a kingdom of priests, or kings and priests, and a holy nation; all their enemies would have been subdued to them, and the haters of the Lord would have submitted themselves to him, through their ministrations; and their time should have endured forever. Such was the kingdom promised to them, and which they forfeited by their disobedience. Now, we find by 1 Pet. 2: 9, that the saints of God, or Christ's elect Church, are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; by Rev. 2: 26, that they are to have power over the nations; by Rev. 5: 9, 10, that they are to be kings and priests, and to reign on the earth; by Dan. 7: 18, that they are to possess the kingdom forever; and by Dan. 7: 14, 27, that all people, nations and languages shall serve and obey them. Many other scriptures of like tenor might be adduced; but these sufficiently show that the kingdom taken from the Jewish nation, or Israel after the flesh, will be given to the elect Church of Christ, consisting of all the redeemed out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, from the beginning of the world to the second coming of Christ. It is not to any portion of the elect church, in any one stage of their redemption, prior to His coming, that the kingdom will be given; but to the Church in its completeness and perfection, when glorified with Christ, at his coming. Mr Lord says, it was the "Davidic Kingdom which the Jewish nation expected, and which had been promised to them, but of which they were unworthy;" and it could be no other that was taken from them and which shall be given to the saints.

Mr. Lord, notwithstanding some inaccuracies in exegesis, has eloquently described the elect church, "to whom only (he says) the kingdom of God, Christ's spiritual kingdom, His precious vineyard, can in a just and legitimate, and strict and true, or literal, or spiritual sense, be said to have been given, when it was taken from the apostate Jewish nation and apostate Jewish Church and given unto them: 'Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give YOU the kingdom.'" Here, still bewildered by his erroneous definition of the Kingdom of Heaven, as being the "spiritual kingdom or professing Church of the dispensation," he speaks of its having already been given to the elect Church, although the elect Church is not yet and cannot be complete, until the Gentile complement be brought in at the close of this dispensation; for until now, through all past ages, the elect of God have successively "died in faith, not having received the promises (in their fulfilment), but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11: 13, 39, 40. Besides he speaks of Christ's elect Church as now "invisible," having no outward or real manifestation; and how could the "spiritual kingdom or professing Church" be given to it? and how could it possess and govern the professing Church? He says, also, that "professing Christianity is not vital Christianity. The professing Christian Church may, like the professing Jewish Church, apostatize, and will apostatize;" and what could the invisible elect Church do with

Digitized by Google

an apostate professing Church? Surely a kingdom so corruptible, and sure to be corrupted, is not the Kingdom of Heaven promised to the saints of God!

But, again, he speaks of the Kingdom of God or Kingdom of Heaven, as being opposed to the kingdoms of this world, and says, "This great disparity, this mighty antagonism, of moral forces—a little remnant, constituting the elect and holy nation on the one hand, the great mass of mankind, or, as the apostle says, 'the whole world lying in wickedness,' on the other—has always existed, and now exists, and will continue to exist, until the present evil dispensation is ended;" "when, but not till then, the kingdoms of this world—shall become the sovereignty of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever." In this there is at least a squinting at the truth; for here the elect Church of believers, who are to be the kings and priests of the kingdom of heaven, is represented as the invisible force or power in opposition to the kingdoms of this world, and answers to the kingdom of God in its present aspect towards this dispensation, being represented by the mustard seed sown in the earth, denoting a hidden and unmanifested state; but which, when the time comes for the saints to take the kingdom and possess it, will be like the mustard in its complete growth and full bloom.

The participation of the saints with Christ in his coming kingdom and glory, is not once clearly stated in this treatise; indeed it is scarcely hinted at, and so obscured by the assignment to them of only the "spiritual kingdom or professing Church," that it could not be known that Mr. Lord really believes that the saints will come with Christ and reign with him, but for the following intimations in his "Briefs on Prophetic Themes." On Dan. 7: 27 (p. 20), he says: "The expression, 'Saints of the Most High,' refers to the saints, Jew and Gentile, of the present dispensation in their thenceforward risen glory, as inhabitants of the new or heavenly Jerusalem, ministering, as a royal priesthood, to the blessed inhabitants of the earth during its millennial career." On p. 69, he speaks of "the righteous living being transformed and the sainted dead being raised from their graves, to meet Him (Christ) at his coming;" and on p. 99 he speaks of Christ as being then seen "in the celestial splendor of resurrection glory, surrounded by the sainted dead of all the ages, and by the sainted living, arrayed, in like manner with him, in their resurrection glory." And we gladly avail ourselves of these evidences of his faith in this Scripture doctrine: inasmuch as it proves that in the tract before us, it was not purposely ignored in making no mention of it, nor intentionally denied in saying that the Jewish nation are the seed, through whom alone, God has appointed that all the nations of the earth shall ultimately be blessed: for this is to deny that the saints of God are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise; this is to deny that they are, as being one with Christ, the seed in a higher and holier sense than are the natural seed; this is to deny that through their righteous administration of the kingdom of God, all the families of the earth, embracing the natural seed of Abraham, as well as the Gentile, shall be blessed. The natural seed or Jewish nation will indeed be, in the millennial age, a medium of blessing to all other nations or families of the earth; but it will be only in a subordinate relation to the saints or holy nation, and not alone, as Mr. Lord asserts. The remaining topics—the restoration of Israel, their last great trouble, their final deliverance and future exaltation, in their proper order, as far as treated, are clearly stated, and the Scripture testimonies, quoted in proof, are abundant and satisfactory. We only wonder how it is possible for any one, as does Prof. H., set them aside or dispose of them by a little special pleading. He first advances the plea that "the Christian Church is the legitimate continuance of Israel," because "there is but one Church of God, one Israel, one house under two administrations, from the days of Abraham till the end of the world," and then asserts, but does not prove, that to it belong most of the promises concerning Israel, and that they have already had their fulfilment in the victorious career of the Christian Church, though he admits, that they are fitted to awaken and

Digitized by Google

sustain hopes that the Jews will yet attain to greater importance in the kingdom of God, or, as he defines the terms, in the Christian Church. In this view of the case he confounds the elect Church with Israel before Christ, and with the Christian Church, as the continuance of Israel, since Christ.

In this view he excludes from Israel all but the believing portion, as though they were of no account with God, not embraced in the Abrahamic Covenant, nor yet in the National Covenant made with them at Sinai. But no one can read Paul's argument in Rom. 9, 10, and 11, without perceiving that he makes a distinction between Israel proper and the Elect remnant who belong to the Church of God: that *to "His kinsmen according to the flesh,* who are Israelites, belonged the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever:" that they had "a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge:" for being "ignorant of God's righteousness they went about to establish their own righteousness;" and "so they obtained not that which they sought for, but the election"—the believing portion "obtained it, and the rest were blinded." And "through their fall," or unbelief, "salvation is come to the Gentiles," in the preaching of the Gospel, whereby God is visiting them "to take out of them a people for His name." "That blindness in part is happened to Israel until the Gentile complement be come in: and then all Israel," that is the blinded part, "shall be saved: for the Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob." "As concerning the Gospel they are enemies," in their national unbelief, for the sake of the Gentile complement; but, as touching the election, they are beloved for the Father's sake; for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. Their national Sinaic covenant is abrogated; but their interest in the gifts and calling of God by the Abrahamic covenant remains unchanged, and shall be fulfilled when Christ "shall return and build again the tabernacle of David, that is fallen down, and build again the ruins thereof, and set it up; that the residue of men"—the blinded portion—"may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles" upon whom His name is called. The Christian Church, then, cannot be a continuance of Israel in any sense, for it cannot be said to be blinded as Israel is blinded; nor to be enemies as concerning the Gospel; nor to be Paul's kinsmen according to the flesh. The Christian Church is an outward visible organization of all who profess to believe that Jesus is the Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, and, from its organization, has been distinct from Israel, which, Hosea says (3: 4, 5) "shall abide many days (during the Gospel dispensation) without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without a teraphim. Afterwards (after the many days, or times, of the Gentiles terminate) shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their King; and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days." This prophecy, certainly, has not found its fulfilment in the Christian Church. And it, and many others of like import, are summed up in our Saviour's lamentation (Matt. 23: 37–39) "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee: how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Jerusalem being the Israelitish capital, is here taken as identical with the nation, and the Saviour's language shows, that, in consequence of their rejecting Him, their house would be a desolation until His second coming, at the end of the Gentile times, when they shall say, "This is our God, we have waited for Him; He will come and save us." These predictions undoubtedly relate to Israel, and to none but Israel, and only to blinded, unbelieving Israel, whose house is now a desolation, while they, dispersed among the nations, abide as a distinct people, until the time shall come when the promises (Jer. 32:

Digitized by Google

37–39) shall be fulfilled, "Behold, I will gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them."

The Christian Church, then, is not a continuance of Israel. It neither inherits Israel's curses nor Israel's blessings—Israel's dispersion nor Israel's restoration. No organizations can be more distinct and dissimilar. Israel and the Christian Church, as distinct streams, run in different channels, through the whole of the Gentiles' times; and at their termination the Christian Church shall be removed, but "Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit." The Christian Church is not the Church of God—the elect remnant. The Church of God is not a distinctive earthly organization, but is composed of all believers whose faith working by love purifies their hearts, and embraces these, out of every age and dispensation, from the fall of Adam till the second advent of Christ. These have generally been included in the body of the professing people of God, and have therefore been designated by names importing such association or relation. Thus the elect from among Israel are called, "the Israel of God," as distinguished from "Israel after the flesh"—the seed of faith or of promise, as distinguished from the natural seed. The Church of the elect are the "chosen generation," the "royal priesthood," the "holy nation," the "peculiar people" to whom the kingdom of God will be given, and who shall reign will Christ.

It is generally admitted that the time allotted in the economy of redemption for the salvation of this elect Church began immediately after the fall, and continues through all ages and dispensations of grace until the second advent of Jesus Christ, when "the marriage of the Lamb" will take place, and "His wife" will have "made herself ready;" and He will "present it to Himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish;" and "faultless before the presence of His glory, with exceeding joy." After that, there will be no more added to this Church,—no more saved through or by the Gospel of the kingdom,—no more glorified with Christ. Every seat at the wedding will be filled, every throne in the kingdom will have an occupant, and the election will be complete. During all past dispensations of grace there have been some saved, and this saved portion has been externally identified with the professing Church of each successive age. The elect Church—the ideal—the Bride of the Lamb—has been always the same in faith and obedience. The professing Church has, on the contrary, been characterized by the peculiarities of each dispensation. It was theocratic in the antediluvian age, monarchial in the Shemitic age, patriarchal in the Abrahamic age, national in the Israelitish age, and denominational in the Christian age. The professing Church of each age was distinctive, separate, and *sui generis*. Each had its own origin, character, means, object, and course. Each, so far, has become corrupt, been repudiated of God, and come to an end. The same result awaits the present. * *

MARY MAGDALENE AND THOMAS.

TYPES OF THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS. JOHN XX.

"THE first day of the week came Mary Magdalene early to the sepulchre, and findeth the stone rolled away from the sepulchre." Here, we find Mary Magdalene, a type of that little flock, the Millennial band, now waiting to be gathered into the fold by the great Shepherd of His sheep, Jesus Christ. "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow Me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand." Surely we must esteem them as wise, and blessed, who thus watch for the Master's coming. And if He shall come in the second watch or in the third watch and find them so, blessed are those servants. (Luke 12 : 38.) But though Mary was first at the sepulchre, first at the tomb, she found the stone

Digitized by Google

rolled away from the door, and in her exceeding joy at this proof of Christ's rising, she, waiting not to look within, ran to tell Peter and John, who returned with her to the sepulchre, and entering in found only the linen clothes where He had lain. Disappointed at not finding Him, they returned with sad and heavy but believing hearts to their home and their duties, still to work in God's vineyard and pray for His coming. Cannot we, too, follow their example, and at our work watch and pray, thus finding ample recompense in the hope that He is coming, though at times our duties are irksome, and we feel weary and disposed to almost give up in our despair, at His long tarrying. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (Hebrews 12: 1–3.)

But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: none, save the beloved presence Himself could comfort her; and do not we also feel rebuked with her, at the reproachful voice of the angel, Woman, why weepest thou? And fretfully she answers, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him; or, as we would say, Because our Lord has not come, and we know not when He will come; and when she had thus said, she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing, and knew not it was Jesus. Are we not too apt to forget the dear invisible Presence always with us and ignore it in pursuit of the day and hour of His next coming, and are we not more deserving of rebuke in this matter than Mary, who had not as yet received the gift of the Holy Ghost? In Christ's conversation with His disciples, that no man knoweth the day nor the hour, no, not the angels in heaven, neither the Son (alluding to His humanity), but the Father, for in His divinity He was fully aware of all things, we are shown that too minute a search into the exact day or hour would be displeasing to God. Christ's knowledge of the time of the end was proved beyond the shadow of a doubt by St. John in his Revelation given to him on the isle of Patmos. (Rev. 1: 1, 2.) The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Now, Jesus asks Mary, in the language of the angel, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? Is there not still a reproach in the loved tones of the musical voice that utters "Mary?"—now a type of the translated saints, for He appears first to her, and will not the glad cry, Rabboni, Master, be re-echoed in the hearts of thousands of His waking and watching saints on that blessed day of His coming? And will not their patient waiting and long suffering be at last fully rewarded at a sight of the beloved form so earnestly longed for, their joy and their crown? Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father, but go unto My brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, to My God and your God. Here we learn a useful and necessary lesson, that we are not to be content with knowing of and watching for Christ's coming ourselves, but we are to tell the brethren, as Mary was desired to tell the disciples, that He had spoken these things unto her. God gives us each a portion of this earth to till and to dress it, and as we give our time to labor and work therein even with the sweat of our brow, so will we be blessed in the abundant fruits of our planting. We are placed here by the hand of God as the instruments of his choosing to shed light (by His word of grace) on the pathway of others, the pure light of His love, shining more and more unto the all-perfect day. And we are always earnestly to covet the promotion of His glory, and to be zealous for His honor with a godly jealousy not to be repented of. This must be the aim and end of our lives. The

Digitized by Google

energies God has given us must not be wasted in fruitless endeavors, or relapse into a dormant oblivion while He tarries according to His own good pleasure. We must neither slumber, sleep, or spend the time He intended should be devoted to the culture of those talents He gave us, in endless fretting and repining, and which He will expect to find doubled on His return. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said He shewed unto them His hands and His side; then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. This appearing to the disciples on the evening of the same day would lead us to suppose (as a type of the same translation) that the time occupied therein took up day and night. His appearing on the morning and evening of the one day is accounted for by referring to St. Luke 17:34, 35, 36. I tell you in that night there shall be two men in one bed, the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding together, the one shall be taken and the other left. Two men shall be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other left; and in the 39th verse, They answered and said unto Him, where, Lord? And He said unto them, Wheresoever the body is there will the eagles be gathered together. The taking of one and leaving of another cannot refer to the last coming of Christ, for Zachariah distinctly says, But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night, but it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light. The explanation conveyed to the disciples in reference to the body and the eagles was this: That as the scent of the carrion will lead the instinct of the birds to find its whereabouts, so will the signs of the times lead God's people by His grace to watch and gather together in prayer for His coming. Our Lord's first translation of the saints must occur before the days of tribulation. His appearing is distinctly mentioned as taking place before that time: As the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (Matthew 24:27.) Then another coming: Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the power of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven. And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (Matt. 24:29, 30.) We return to St. John, 22:24. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. Here we find Thomas a type of those foolish virgins, who for want of a sufficient quantity of oil in their vessels with their lamps, were shut out from the marriage supper of the Lamb, so Thomas in his hardness of heart had not met with the disciples to be ready for Christ's rising.

The other disciples therefore said unto Him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my fingers into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe. Is not Thomas very similar to the unbelievers of the present day, who, in their blindness, will not see the real comfort that is offered for their acceptance, and like him in his mental conflict with doubt, which necessarily caused him much anguish. Will they not suffer much tribulation before they become convinced of their error, and are at last forgiven and received into the favor of God? And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them; then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in their midst, and said, "Peace be unto you." And Thomas with them. Here is the second translation of the saints. We can almost fancy we hear the reproachful tones of the Saviour's voice in addressing the now believing virgins, in the person of Thomas. "Be not faithless, but believing," and their happy answer, "My Lord, and my God!" And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass,

Digitized by Google

having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, thou King of the saints. Who shall not fear Thee, oh Lord, and glorify Thy name! for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest. (Rev. 15: 2d, 3d and 4th verses.) This is the harvest reaped by the Son of Man: And he that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle, and the earth was reaped. The ingathering or harvest of the foolish virgins into the barn of God is here fully illustrated in this second translation of saints. (Rev. 14:16.) And the blessing attending those who are partakers of the first translation is well foretold in our Lord's answer to Thomas: Because thou hast seen me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed. (St. John 20:2–9.) And again: Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching; verily, I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. (Luke 12:37.) Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. (Luke 12: 32.)

Mary Magdalene and Thomas are double types of the first and second translation; she it was out of whom our Lord had cast seven devils, or purified seven times, and who will be redeemed out of the seventh age, thus representing the first translation. And Thomas, called Didymus or twin, represents in his person the twin or second translation.

JEDA.

Selections.

THE YEAR 1868.

ONE who reads the secular press, cannot fail to notice its continual record of evidence corroborating our faith and hope, that we live in the last of "the last days," in the crisis of the ages. The following article from *The Scientific American* on the remarkable year just closed, is only a sample of the accumulating evidence of this class:

From whatever point of view we cohsider the year just passed into history, we are struck with the number of important events that have been crowded into its annals. With its political or religious aspects, although they present much food for profitable thought and study, it is not our province to deal. The progress of science, and the remarkable physical phenomena so numerous, and in some instances so appalling, during the twelve short months that have rushed past us, give ample scope for a brief and profitable retrospect.

The year 1868 will henceforth be known as the earthquake year. History has not on its records a period of such universal terrestrial convulsion as the one just left behind us, and scarcely one of greater disaster from this cause. The eruption of Vesuvius, and the excited state of many other volcanoes throughout the world, indicate that the mighty forces to which these phenomena are due, are still at work. Whether their energies are in such measure exhausted that no further immediate danger is to be apprehended, is yet undetermined. These terrible visitations are gradually changing the physical aspect of our globe; and from them we can gather some idea of the power of the immense volcanic disturbances, which, ages ago, threw up our vast mountain ranges, and engulfed whole continents.

No less grand and impressive have been the celestial phenomena of the year. The great solar eclipse, possessing in some respects features of greater interest than any that has occurred for a long time past, or that will occur for a long time to come, has been not the least of these remarkable occurrences, both on account of its special peculiarities, and the results which have been obtained from organized observation. Add to this the splendid meteoric shower of November, and we may well say that

Digitized by Google

the heaven above and the earth beneath have been prolific of wonders.

The progress in the most mighty undertakings which the world has ever witnessed is no less remarkable. The most gigantic railroad enterprise ever attempted has been pushed this year almost to completion. The Suez canal now almost joins the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, while during the year a movement has been initiated for the construction of a similar work across the Isthmus of Darien, which will unite the two great oceans. A new sub-Atlantic telegraph, of greater length than any heretofore attempted, has been made, and will soon connect the two continents, to be followed, no doubt, by others of greater magnitude. It has also been the subject of serious contemplation to lay a cable between the Pacific coast and China, and we would probably hazard little in predicting that some even now old men will live to see that work accomplished. Never has the earth seen a period of greater enterprises; never before has civilization made such triumphant advances.

The discoveries and improvements in the sciences and arts have been numerous and important. To review them and specify them as they demand would fill a volume. A glance at the index of the volume we have just closed, will show the great variety of subjects upon which scientific minds are now at work—not in mere speculation, but in actual and accurate experiment. Almost daily, nature responds to some bold inquiry of this kind, and a new truth is born to science.

HIDING IN GOD.

"Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence. Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion."—Ps. 31: 20.

Not from the work appointed us to do,
Our Maker hides us;
Not from the suffering of mortal woe,
That oft betides us:

But whoso treadeth where the Saviour trod,
Where duty guideth,
Fearful of nothing but the power of God,
His Maker hideth.

He walks amid the furnace-fires alone,
Yet well attended;
For lo! there stands beside him God's own Son
To earth descended.

Thousands and tens of thousands smitten lie
Breathless around him;
Safe in the secret place of the Most High,
Death hath not found him.

Quiet in God,—the ever-present seal
Of faith unspoken,—
Believing faces,—the infant lips reveal
Its nameless token;

A gift bestowed upon the poor oppressed,
To kings forbidden;
Beneath the shadow of Thy wings to rest,
Securely hidden.

To bear for them the cross as if for Thee,
Strengthen me ever;
Among Thine hidden ones, oh, number me,
Now and for ever.

NATURE UNENDING.

We have never seen a finer argument for the perpetuity of the earth, and sun, and moon than the following. It is the whole thing in a nutshell,—it is scriptural and logical. Indeed, it is conclusive. "The earth abideth forever," is the testimony of inspiration. From the Bible we learn a fact for science—that the sun has endless duration. This is founded on Ps. 72: 5, 7, 17; and 89: 3, 4, 28, 29, 36, 37.

It is predicated by Christ, of His throne and of His people, that each shall continue forever, as long as the sun and moon endure. There would be no force in the parallel if the sun were to exist for a less period than is affirmed of Christ, His throne, and His people. The sun is declared to be a witness forever in the heavens of the covenant of God to His Son, and to the redeemed for their unending existence. The witness must be cotemporaneous and coterminous with the covenant. The covenant exists so long as the subject continues. But the subject continues to endless duration. The witnesses must be of concurrent perpetuity. Therefore the witnesses, the sun and the moon, have endless duration.

By parity of reasoning, the solar system has a like unending duration; for the superior, the sun, controls and carries the inferior. I believe this argument is as logical as it is biblical.

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

DANIEL AND HIS PROPHECIES.

THE DANIELIAN THEOLOGY.

THE Theology of the Book of Daniel has also been brought forward as an argument against its genuineness and inspiration. It is hardly worth while to notice such criticism. Within a year or two past, there was a short poem found on a blank leaf of an early copy of the works of John Milton, in the British Museum. It was apparently signed J. M. It was published, as perhaps the production of Milton, and a thousand critics set to work to decide the question. Learned men, and adepts pronounced it a genuine Miltonic composition, and that Milton only could have woven "the subtle melody" of its lines. Others equally wise and experienced declared it mere rubbish, and that Milton never could have written it except "in his dotage." And so the controversy goes on, with no prospect that criticism will ever settle whether Milton wrote it or not. How great, therefore, is the presumption and conceit of a certain school of philologists, critics and literary experts, who claim to be able to tell, by internal evidence alone, just what chapters and verses of each particular writer of the Scriptures are from him, and what not! They blate largely about what is Petrine, Pauline, Jehovistic, Elohistic, Maccabean, etc. Wearily picking up out of grammars and vocabularies the dried bits of a dead language, and utterly unable to pronounce a word of it as the people who spoke it, they fancy they can feel and detect all variations of construction, phrase, or idea pertaining or not to each author, and hence take upon themselves authoritatively to expurgate the sacred Scriptures, and to cast out this and the other book or passage from the canon, telling us that such and such things are apocryphal, and on no other ground than that so their critical sense decides. And yet here is a poem, in English, the plain English we all speak, English which a child can read and master—a poem written in London, in the time of Milton,—which Englishmen, fellow-countrymen of Milton, his fellow-townsmen, familiar with every line he ever wrote, critics, experts, poets themselves, cannot tell if it be John Milton's or not! Out upon such pretensions and attempts to mutilate our Bibles! If the best English critics in the world cannot settle from internal evidence whether a poem, in the tongue which they have known from their cradles, is Milton's or not, it is worse than ridiculous for men to presume, upon no better evidence, to decide that the Book of Daniel is not Daniel's work.

But the Book of Daniel does contain a Theology, one which it is the duty of believers to study, one which is particularly rich and clear, and one which it may be very proper to glance at in this connection.

I. OF GOD.

The existence of one God, supreme over all things, is clearly taught in this Book. Daniel said to the King, "there is a God in heaven;" 2:28. The King is also made to confess "there is no other God that can deliver after this sort;" 3:29. The same is pronounced "the most High," 7:25; also "the great and dreadful God," 9:4; yea, "the God of gods," 11:36.

Neither is it some fancied being that is thus spoken of, different from that one God, who revealed himself to Abraham, Moses, and the prophets of Israel. Daniel worshipped this same God as the God of his Jewish fathers; 2:23. The God of the Book of Daniel is none other than the living and true God, beside whom there is no God.

The God of the Book of Daniel is described as possessed of all the proper attributes of God. He is "God of heaven;" 2:8, 37, 43. "Wisdom and might are his;" 2:20. "He knoweth what is in darkness, and light dwelleth with him;" 2:22. He "liveth forever:" 4:34; 6:20, 26. "He doeth according to his will in the

Digitized by Google

army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" 4:35. He is "King of heaven," "God of gods and Lord of kings;" 4:37; 2:47; 11:36. He is "able to deliver his servants;" 3:17, 29. He is the God in whose hand man's breath and all man's ways are; 5:23. "All his works are truth, and his ways judgment;" 4:37. He is righteous, 9:7, 14, 16; "merciful and gracious," 9:9; hears prayer, 9:17, 23; 10:12; is angry with sin, 9:16; and is able to abase them that walk in pride, 4:37.

The God of the Book of Daniel exercises a particular providence over all the affairs of the world, and all events are ascribed to him. Nebuchadnezzar was made to confess that "the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will;" that "He changeth the times and seasons; He removeth kings and setteth up kings: He giveth wisdom to the wise and knowledge to them that know understanding;" and that his "dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation;" 2:21; 4:32, 34; 6:27. The fancied God of Deism and rationalistic philosophy, who is forever bound by his own laws and never interferes in any way with their natural operation, is not the God of the Book of Daniel, as he is not the God of any portion of the Bible. Daniel's God is present with all His works, concerned in all that cometh to pass, and ever giving great signs and mighty wonders. *He* gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into Nebuchadnezzar's hand; 1:2. *He* brought Daniel into favor; 1:9. *He* gave the four Hebrew youths knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; 1:17; 2:23. *He* gave Nebuchadnezzar his kingdom, power and glory; 2:37; 5:18. *He* sets up and gives out dominion, and creates the kingdom that is to destroy all other kingdoms and to stand forever; 2:44. *He* made known to the king what was to be in the future; 2:45. *He* delivered the Hebrew youths from the fiery furnace; 3:29. *He* decreed the king's humiliation and insanity; 4:24. *He* numbered and finished the kingdom of Belshazzar; 5:26. *He* delivered Daniel from the lions; 6:20–22. *He* giveth judgment to the saints; 8:22. *He* brought forth his people out of the land of Egypt, scattered them for their sins, and heard when the voice of confession and supplication came up before him; 9:3–23. And *He* comforteth his anxious ones; 12:9.

In all this there certainly is nothing discernible which does not fully accord with both the earlier and later Scriptures, or which we will not do well to accept, believe, and act on, as immutable and most precious truth. The Book of Daniel gives glorious testimony to our all-glorious God.

II. Of Angels.

It is agreeable to reason and Scripture to believe that the wide interval between us and God is not a blank, but is filled up with orders of creatures superior to man, and largely concerned in the administrations of the Divine government. The existence of such orders is certainly taught in the Book of Daniel, and a very important part is assigned them in the affairs of our world. This has also been objected to this Book; and the system of Angelology which it presents, is said to be a mere transfer from heathen theosophy, and hence not entitled to be taken as Divine and true.

Nebuchadnezzar, in relating his vision, does indeed refer to *holy watchers*, after the style of the ancient Zoroastrian religion, in which secondary deities were recognized under this name. According to the Zend-Avesta, "Ormuzd has set four *watchers* in the four quarters of the heavens, to keep their eye upon the host of the stars. One stands here as the *watcher* of his circle; the other, there. He has placed them at such and such posts, as *watchers* over such and such a circle of the heavenly regions; and this by his own power and might." Such was the teaching of the religion of this heathen king. He knew nothing of the true Bible doctrine on the subject of angels. And when he had a vision from God, and beheld in it the movements of angels of God, how was it possible for him to describe them except in the language and conceptions of his own polytheistic system? He called them by the name of the Zoroastrian sub-deities, because he knew no other

Digitized by Google

name, and knew of no such heavenly beings except as his theosophy fancied. Daniel does not say that these angels were the Zoroastrian watchers. He whom the king described as a Zoroastrian *watcher*, the prophet plainly identifies, not as a heathen sub-deity, but as a messenger of the true God of heaven and earth; and the decree which the watchers uttered he interprets as "the decree of the Most High," given into the hands of angels to execute. There is nothing Magian, or at all different from the common scriptural teaching on the subject, either before or since Daniel's time.

Daniel uses various designations for these heavenly agents. He calls them "*angels*," 6: 24; *ministering ones*, 7: 10; *holy ones*, 8: 13, 14; *chief princes*, and *princes*, 10: 13, 20; 12: 1. He also gives the proper names of some of them, Gabriel, 9: 21; Michael, 10: 13; 12: 1.

He describes the aspects of the angels as prevailingly human, but very exalted and glorious, 5: 24; 8: 16, 26; 10: 5, 6, 17; 12: 7. One in particular he represents as a man clothed in linen, girded with fine gold of Uphaz, whose body was like the beryl, his face as the appearance of lightning, his eyes as lamps of fire, his arms and feet resembling polished brass, and his voice like the voice of a multitude; 10: 5, 6.

He also represents these celestial beings as exceedingly numerous. In his vision of the Ancient of Days, he beheld "thousand thousands ministering unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before Him;" 7: 9, 10.

The office He assigns to the angels is the office of creatures only, and that of ministering organs of the Divine providence and government. They conveyed a knowledge of God's purposes to Nebuchadnezzar; 4: 13–17, 24. One of them was sent to hinder the lions from harming the wronged prophet; 6: 22. One of them acted as God's messenger to interpret to Daniel his vision of the four beasts; 7: 16. Gabriel performed a like office with reference to the vision of the ram and goat; 8: 16–26; and the seventy weeks; 9: 21–27. And still another acted as his hierophant in all the remaining visions. Others of them are represented as serving as heavenly guardians of God's people, and their helpers and princes; particularly Michael the great prince, and one of the chief princes, who standeth for the children of the prophet's people; 10: 13; 12: 1.

Daniel says nothing very special about *bad* angels; and yet it would seem as if some of these mysterious principalities and powers were to be considered as evil and antagonistic to God and His gracious purposes. We read of "the prince of the Kingdom of Persia," 10: 13; and "the prince of Grecia," 10: 20; both of whom belong to these angelic potencies, and both of whom are represented as seeking to hinder the good angel who was in converse with Daniel, and really so antagonistic as to call forth violence to keep down their resistance; 10: 20.

But, whether only good, or only some good and others evil, they are of various ranks and degrees of dignity. This particularly is objected against Daniel, as the mere fancy of oriental magianism. But such it is not. Distinctions among the heavenly hosts were revealed from the first; and it would be out of harmony with all we know of God's creations, if such distinctions did not exist. We read of cherubim at the gates of Paradise, and specifically of "the angel of the Lord"—of Morning Stars singing together, and Sons of God shouting for joy when the world was made—of Seraphim and Cherubim crying the triune sanctus before God—of chariots and horsemen that make up the army of God, and the Captain of the Lord's hosts,—and all, long before the days of Daniel. That he should speak of these heavenly beings therefore, as of different orders and degrees of rank, is in perfect harmony with what was revealed and recorded in the books of God, before he wrote. And that he should bring out the subject with greater conspicuity, is in perfect keeping with that progress of doctrine so manifest in the whole method of revelation. If later prophets are to be considered as adding nothing to what was given by preceding ones, there was no real occasion for them, and we may as well burn all the sacred books after the Pentateuch.

In harmony with the Scriptures in general, and only with greater clearness, does Daniel thus show us the differences of order among

Digitized by Google

these heavenly intelligences, and their potency in human history and the life of nations and nature. Compare also Col. 1:16; 1 Thess. 4:16; Jno. 5:4; Heb. 1:7; Rev. 7:1–3; 14:8: 16:5, etc.

III. Of The Christ.

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." If prophets have in them nothing referring to the Christ, or leading the way to Him, we may safely assume that they are none of God's prophets. But Daniel shows no deficiency in this particular. Nay, he has only too much, and that too definite and particular, to say about the Christ, to suit our rationalistic theologasters. Having not much occasion for a Saviour in their systems of thinking, of course, a Book which makes so much of Him is quite at variance with their instincts of the truth, and hence they would set it aside as apocryphal.

From the earliest ages, and among the chosen people throughout their history, the coming of One who should be the Deliverer and Saviour of all His, was not only hoped for, but this hope was the great centre of all their prophecies and all their ceremonies. That coming One was known by a variety of names, but by none more common than *Messiah*—an *anointed One—God's anointed;* Is. 2:2. Daniel speaks of this coming One, and calls Him absolutely and distinctively *Messiah*; 9:25, 26. He calls Him "Messiah *Nagid*"—Messiah *the Prince*—the supreme Ruler—the One that goes in and out before the people in the administration of government. In the same manner is Messiah described in the earlier Scriptures; Is. 9:7; 55:4; Micah 5:1; Ezek. 34:23.

The office or work of the Messiah is also distinctly described. He was to "finish the transgression;" that is, to restrain it, shut it up from overflowing, stop it; to "make an end of sin;" seal it up, cover it;—to "make reconciliation for iniquity;" appease wrath with reference to it, give satisfaction for it, restore the peace which it had broken;—to "bring in everlasting righteousness;" produce a just basis for the justification of sinners, and for the deliverance of them from condemnation;—to "seal vision and prophecy;" that is, consummate, establish, fulfil and complete them, settling them as true, and bringing to their end the things foreshown in them; 8:24.

His qualification for all this, and the manner of accomplishing it, are also given. He is referred to as capable of suffering, 9:26; and yet is described as "The Most Holy," 9:24. He was to endure a death-penalty—"*be cut off.*" The word *carath* constantly denotes a penal excision—a cutting off for sin—a violent death for offence against the law. Thus was Messiah to be "cut off," as also expressed by Isaiah 53: But He was to be cut off "*not for Himself.*" His was to be a vicarious suffering—the endurance of penal inflictions for the sake and in the place of others; 9:26.

But other works and grander administrations than these are ascribed to Him. There is princely rulership and heavenly dominion assigned to him, as well as earthly humiliation. He comes in the clouds of heaven; and dominion, glory, and a kingdom are given Him, that all peoples should serve Him, all nations obey Him, and His kingdom never end; 7:13, 14, 27.

This King is described as of human birth, "the Son of man," 7:13. The word *bar*, denotes descent; and *bar-anash*, descent *from man*. And yet He is further described as much more than man, and truly Divine. He is accompanied by angels to the throne of God, in that Majesty which had, before Daniel in this place, been spoken of God only, "coming with the clouds of heaven;" 7:13. As God manifested Himself in the cloud in the Exodus, the wilderness, the tabernacle, the temple, and as the clouds hide from us all that is beyond them, so they are spoken of continually as the visible hiding-place of the invisible Presence of God. To ascribe to any being a place there, was to associate him with the prerogative of God, who maketh the cloud His chariot, about whom are clouds and darkness, whose pavilion round about Him are thick clouds of the sky, who rideth upon the swift cloud, and the clouds are the dust of His feet. Compare 3:25. Even the rationalistic and skeptical critics agree, that in the Book of Daniel "the Messiah appears as a superhuman being," and has

Digitized by Google

"qualities and attributes of Jehovah transferred to him."

Neither is this a mere imitation of Ezekiel, taken from the Sibylline books in the time of the Maccabees, as these men would teach us, but the common doctrine of the preceding Scriptures. Jesus himself cited the 110th Psalm in proof of his Divinity; Matt. 22 : 41–45. He there appears as David's Lord, sitting at the right hand of God, a King whose power none could withstand; and as God, and the Son of God, whose throne is forever; Heb. 1:8.

Isaiah had declared, concerning that Son which was to be born into the world, and whose administrations were to be so glorious, that His name should be called, and so Himself also be, "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace;" Is. 9 : 6. He had also been announced as to be born of a Virgin, and His name was to be Emanuel, God with us; Is. 7 : 14. Micah, the contemporary of Isaiah, had prophesied His birth at Bethlehem, to be the Ruler of Israel, with the going forth from of old, from the days of eternity; 5 : 1. Zechariah speaks of Him as God's Fellow, 13 : 7; and Malachi as the Lord whom Israel sought, 3 : 1; all answering to the Saviour's own account of Himself, that He was before Abraham, that He came forth from the Father, that He is one with the Father, and that whosoever saw Him saw the Father, of whom He is the only begotten Son.

As to the twofold coming of Christ, like all the ancient Scriptures, the Book of Daniel does not clearly distinguish between them. There is a coming as the Son of man, ending in violent death, which referred to the advent in the flesh; and there is also a coming in the clouds of heaven, as a triumphing Judge, and an everlasting and worshipful Ruler; 7 : 13, 16; but exactly what relation the one had to the other remained to be developed long afterwards. To reconcile these two pictures, quite comprehensible now, the ancient Rabbins conceived of two Messiahs, or a change in the manner of the Christ's coming, according as they might prove themselves worthy or unworthy.

Of all the prophets, Daniel is the only one by whom was revealed the definite time of the Saviour's Advent; 9: 24–26.

IV. Of the State of Man and the Securement of Divine Favor.

It has been objected to the Book of Daniel that its tone is ascetic and Pharisaic, after the style of the later Jews. This is about equal to all the rest of this class of objections, without foundation.

A general and dreadful corruption of humanity is certainly implied. Profoundly penitential is the confession which Daniel makes of the sins of his people, not excepting himself; and they are contemplated as the best of the race, even the most favored of God; 9 : 4–19. And in answer to this confession and prayer, Gabriel announces the Messiah, as the One through whom atonement should be made, transgression restrained, sins stayed, righteousness brought in, and the sin penalty taken away; 9 : 21–26. Is this unevangelical? Is it not in thorough accord with prophets and apostles?

Great power is assigned to self-humiliation and prayer; 2 : 18, 19; 6 : 11; 9 : 3; 10 : 2; but to say that this is superstitiously exaggerated, is to fly in the face of the Scriptures, and the recorded experiences of the saints in all ages before and since. The truth is, that there is nothing like humble and earnest prayer. It puts all the resources of Omnipotence at the command of man, provided that he asks no unreasonable, unnecessary, or wrong thing. Jesus himself says, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you." John 15 : 7; 16 : 23. And prayer, such as Daniel's, belonged to the exercise of living faith, which is the hand that takes hold upon God's salvation, according to all the Scriptures.

That he should advise Nebuchadnezzar to escape from his sins by righteousness, and from his iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, 4 : 27, was simply the common doctrine of repentance, which required the breaking off of sin by

Digitized by Google

its opposite, and which is always requisite to forgiveness. It was the same that Jonah preached to the Ninevites, which the Saviour Himself accepted in Zaccheus, and which ever goes along with the proclamation of the Gospel. It was just that lesson which John the Baptizer urged upon Herod, Paul upon Felix, and that any preacher of righteousness would lay down to a proud, unjust and oppressive heathen despot. And it is written in the New Testament as well as in the Old, that the merciful shall obtain mercy; whether unto everlasting life or not, is another question, upon which Daniel's advice does not touch.

That he should resort to fasting, and abstinence from pleasant food, on two great public occasions—the approaching close of the years of captivity, and the hindrances interposed to the rebuilding of the temple by the councillors of Cyrus,—was just what God had commanded through Joel to be done in times of trouble, and what had been acceptably done by many before him. Even the Saviour Himself has given directions for like occasions, and has told us that there are some evils which cannot be dislodged without it. And that Christian is deficient in some of the most vital impulses of true godliness, who cannot see and feel the propriety, at times, at least, of just such abnegations in connection with special applications for the help of God.

The Book of Daniel contemplates the mercy and favor of God as belonging to those who persistently and faithfully abjure all idolatry for the worship of the true God only. This is the great lesson of the account of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; 3:13–28. True piety is located in love to God, the keeping of His commandments, and earnest seeking unto Him with penitence, prayer, and faith; 9:3, 4. God's people are such as depart not from His precepts and judgments, 9:5; but hearken unto His servants the prophets, 9;6; obey the voice of the Lord, and walk in His ways, 9:10; turn from iniquities, and understand the truth, 9:13. And to all such the mercies and forgivenesses of God, and all the promises of His covenant, are made to apply, 9:4, 9; 10:12. Surely this is neither Pharisaic nor unevangelical. It is the truth of God.

V. Of the Consummation.

The Book of Daniel says nothing about heaven as a place of abode for the righteous. The whole blessedness of man in its highest consummation is connected with the setting up of a kingdom, which the God of Heaven is to set up, which shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms, and shall stand forever, 2:44. It is a kingdom which is finally to supersede and take the place of the present world-powers, 2:44. It is established by the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven, 7:13, 14. It is not fully manifested till after the judgment shall sit, 7:26, 27. It is a kingdom over the earth, under the heaven, 7:27. Men and nations as they dwell upon the earth are to be the subjects of it, 7:14. The Son of Man is the personal possessor of this kingdom, and all its glory, dominion, and authority, 7:13, 14, 27. The saints are to have a share in this kingdom, and in the administration of its affairs, 7:18, 27. It is to be eternal, 2:44; 7:14, 18. The Prince of this kingdom was to come as a sufferer at the end of 69 hebdomads from the decree of the authorities at Babylon to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, 9:25, 26. Great calamities and destructions were to befall Jerusalem and its people subsequent to this restoration, before the predicted kingdom should be manifested in its full glory, 9:26, 27; 11:21–45; 12:1. The saints of God are to be oppressed and sufferers in this world until the judgment shall sit, 7:19–27. Those of the Lord's people who die meanwhile, are in a state of hopeful rest, 12:13. There will be two resurrections of the dead, one to everlasting life, and one to shame and everlasting contempt, 12:2. The righteous and the faithful are to have a most exalted lot in the time of their resurrection, 12:3, 13. The end of all God's present administrations with men, and the consummation of all his gracious purposes, will have been accomplished with the final setting up of this glorious kingdom of the Son of Man and his saints, 7:28; 8:19; 9:24; 12:4, 6–13.

Digitized by Google

EUROPEAN WAR-CLOUDS.

THE correspondent of the Philadelphia *Morning Post*, writes from Paris under date of February 2d, that this year must inevitably bring forth a general and fierce European war.

Every country in Europe has long been dissatisfied to the utmost with its own and the general situation. The sudden and radical subversion of the economical laws, which for centuries governed the world, have dislocated the habits and interests of all classes, and led to discontent, material sufferings, and demoralization, which induce part of the people to think that a new territorial partition of the continent among the different races will result to the universal advantage. The rest of the people, the greatest number, are confident that a general revolution, whatever may be the geographical result, will give them the best opportunity of establishing the economical law henceforth, their favorite theme, the socialist dogma. So that, though divided as to the secret or avowed reasons for war and its ultimate consequences, all, high or low, rich or poor, capitalists or laborers, economists or socialists, join in a common and irresistible call for WAR.

France, where both people and rulers have been so deeply wounded in their pride and prestige for the last six years, is longing for the signal to advance to the Rhine, for it is very likely in the vicinity of that river that the European Gordian knot will be cut; and besides her ambition for glory and her desire to regain her natural frontiers, France, perhaps more than any other power in Europe, is eager for war, because of the above explained economical uneasiness. As for the Emperor, he is certainly resolved to play the whole for the whole. If he succeeds in getting the Rhine and assuming again the *role* or arbitrator of Europe, he will have reached the goal that he has ever had before him; and he is bent upon gaining it, or falling gallantly and with the honors of war.

Prussia, drunk with glory since the day of Sadowa, is eager for a contest with France, not only for political purposes, but also to give the proof that the Prussian army is the first army in the world, and the Prussian generals the first generals.

Behind Prussia, all Germany waits but a word from Berlin to rush towards the Rhine first, and the Danube soon after.

Russia, stronger than ever after the annihilation of Poland, and the failure of the Western scheme of conciliation between the Mahomedan and the Christian populations of the Ottoman empire, will rise as a single man, with enthusiasm and confidence in her final success. She is ready to make all sacrifices to avenge her disasters in 1865, and to give the *coup de grace* to the "sick man," whose succession is hers, according to a religious and political faith, from the Pruth to the Amoor. Sustained, morally and materially, by all the Greco-slave populations of the Sultan's dominions, numbering nearly two-thirds of the whole, the traditional Moscovian policy meets now with a chance that Russia would certainly not allow her Government to throw away. But the Emperor and his counsellors share the resolution of the people to set up the St. Andrew's cross upon the shores of the Bosphorus.

Austria—poor Austria! who is being day after day dismembered, and whose prestige was lost forever at Sadowa, has but one chance to recover part of her greatness and influence among nations, and that chance is War.

All throughout Europe one smells powder; thousands of men are working night and day from the Seine to the Neva, in completing the engines of attack and defence; the arsenals are overflowing with means of destruction so terrible that the genius of Hell seems to have presided over their creation. The fleets and railroads are ready for the transportation of armies amounting to five or six millions of soldiers, commanded by illustrious chiefs, and eager for glory, honors, and slaughter. The time of words and compromises has past. The hour of deeds and radical settlements is struck, and the governments themselves, in spite of their casuistic assurances for peace, cannot conceal any longer the solemnity of the situation and the imminence of *war*. And out of that war may come the Antichrist. Any day, then, Christ may call for His watching ones.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VII. APRIL, 1869. No. 4.

Special Contributions.

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH.

(Continued from page 37.)

The continuance of the Christian Church through the Millennium is a Whitbyan dogma—a prominent feature of the spiritual reign theory—as thus taught by him, "that after the fall of Antichrist, there shall be such a glorious state of the Church by the conversion of the Jews to the Christian faith, as shall be to it life from the dead; that it shall then flourish in peace and plenty, in righteousness and holiness, and in a pious offspring; that then shall begin a glorious and undisturbed reign of Christ over both Jew and Gentile, to continue a thousand years, during the time of Satan's binding." The conversion of the Jews, and of all nations to Christianity is its twin dogma; for if the Millennium shall be embraced in the Christian era, and Christianity shall be then completely dominant over all nations, it follows that all nations, including the Jews, must be converted and brought into the Christian Church prior thereto. Both dogmas have their origin in that "pernicious rule of interpretation" introduced by Origen in the third century, who declared that "the Scriptures are of little use to those who understand them as they are written." And from the days of Origen, as Prof. H. says, "up to Luther's time, the principle of allegorical interpretation prevailed in the Church, and the result therefore was, that in explaining the Scriptures men were governed by inclination, and found in them that, and that only, which agreed with their wishes. Luther did, it is true, overthrow the principle as a principle; but he was not able to uproot the practice, either for himself or for others."

Prof. H. quotes Walch as giving us the two phases in Luther's opinions on the conversion of the Jews, viz., "At first he thought that it was to be looked for and expected: but latterly he did not hesitate to cast away such hopes." At first he severely censured the manner in which the Jews had been treated by the popes, bishops, monks, and others, as being the chief obstacle to their conversion; and he proposed in laboring for this end a kind and friendly deportment. But after he was himself disappointed in his expectations, he discarded the idea of their conversion as a nation, and wrote and spoke bitterly against them. He did not disbelieve in the conversion of some of the Jews—a remnant according to the election of grace—but in the conversion of the nation to Christianity he had no faith. We know not whether he ever expressed any opinion on the Restoration of Israel in the future Kingdom of Christ; but there is testimony that he looked for "the speedy coming of Christ and the renovation of all things."

No Personal Reign Millenarian believes in the conversion of the Jewish nation, or the Gentile World, before the coming of Christ. And the coming of Christ will terminate the Christian dispensation, so there can be no conversion of them to Christian faith, exactly as now exercised, subsequent to this dispensation. Christian faith necessarily belongs to the Christian dispensation. It is "the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen." It is the reliance of the mind upon the promises of God respecting the coming and kingdom of Christ. Its character is displayed in the following language of Peter. "Blessed

Digitized by Google

be the GOD and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of GOD through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time; wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom having *not* seen, ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet BELIEVING, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, &c." It is manifest that such a conversion—such a regeneration and such a faith—can only be effected and exercised prior to "the appearing of Jesus Christ." After his *coming* there can be no looking for that blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of the great GOD and our Saviour Jesus Christ; no being patient unto the coming of the Lord; no looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God and being diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless; no hope that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, with its purifying effects. The coming of Christ will not only put an end to the Christian dispensation, but it will so alter all the relations of mankind in the scheme of Redemption, that there can thenceforth be *no* conversion to the Christian faith precisely as now, and no additions to the Church properly so called. The Gospel of the Kingdom will be no longer preached among the nations for the obedience of faith. The Gentile complement will have been added to the Israel of GOD, and the Church will be ready for the revelation of Divine glory.

The nationality of Israel will be restored at the termination of the times of the Gentiles. It will be a restoration to their own land. "Thus saith the Lord, again there shall be heard in this place, which ye say shall be desolate, without man, and without inhabitants, and without beast, the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the Lord of hosts; for he is good; for His mercy endureth forever; and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise unto the house of the Lord: for I will cause to return the captivity of the land as at the first." (Jer. 33 : 10–11.)

"For in my holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the first fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. I will accept you with your sweet savor, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen." (Ezek. 20 : 40–41.)

"And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." (Amos 9 : 14, 15.)

From these Scriptures it is evident that they will be nationally restored in their persistent adherence to their Jewish faith.

Then the first resurrection will take place, and the living saints will be translated, and the elect Church, in its completeness, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Then the words of Jesus will be fulfilled, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." (Jno. 11 : 25, 26.) And the words of Paul will be verified, "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead (saints) shall be raised incorruptible, and we (the living saints) shall be changed." (1 Cor. 15 : 51, 52.) "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto

Digitized by Google

the coming of the Lord, shall not precede them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:15, 17.)

This will be the first act of judgment in separating the true from the false, in approving and counting worthy of eternal life all true believers and obedient disciples, and in condemning and rejecting all mere professors and hypocrites. And while the former shall be immortalized and glorified, the latter, remaining "in the congregation of the dead," or among the ungodly on earth, will be condemned, and known as reprobate silver. Then the professing Church on earth—the mystic Babylon—comprising all sects and denominations, will be given up to "become the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." And restored Israel shall be the object of God's special grace on earth during the dispensation of Christ's coming, which will intervene between the "times of the Gentiles" and the manifestation of Christ and His saints; a period of perhaps forty years, as is indicated by Micah 7: 14, 15. "Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old. According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous things." The feeding of the flock during this period is thus predicted in Ezekiel 34:11-13. "For thus saith the Lord God, Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel, by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country."

In this restoration and under this providential feeding, the children of Israel, having taken their silver and gold with them, shall enlarge and beautify Jerusalem, and build a temple unto the Lord, and restore their ancient forms of worship. Their wealth will greatly increase, and they shall dwell at ease in unwalled villages. "And they shall build the old wastes, and shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed their flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be their ploughmen and their vine-dressers. But they shall be named the priests of the Lord; men shall call them the ministers of our God. They shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall they boast themselves." (Isaiah 61:4, 6.) Their wealth will command the respect and secure the service of the world.

At length, towards the close of that period, their wealth and power will excite the cupidity and envy of the nations, and "Gog the Chief Prince of Meshech and Tubal, with his confederates, will declare war against them, and with a vast army invade the land, and overrunning it from north to south (Ezek. 38), shall besiege Jerusalem, and take it, and subject it to pillage and to the brutal licentiousness of the soldiery." (Zech. 14:1, 2.) It will be "even the time of Jacob's trouble"—the consummation of his punishment—"but he shall be saved out of it." (Jer. 30:4-9.) For then "there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground." And the Mount of Olives shall cleave in sunder from east to west, half of it removing to the north and half to the south, forming a very great valley, into which the Israelites will flee from their enemies as they fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, and they shall cry to the Lord for succor. And suddenly from His pavilion in the air above, attended by His saints, He shall be revealed in great power and glory, and His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount

Digitized by Google

of Olives. And they shall say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us" "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." "In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the Messenger Jehovah before them." And He will "seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle." And He "will call for a sword against Gog throughout all His mountains; every man's sword shall be against his brother. And he will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone." (See Ezekiel 38; Zech. 14: 3–5, and 13: 8, 9.)

Then the Lord will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him: yea, every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth—families of the land shall mourn because of Him (Zech. 13: 10–14; Rev. 1: 7). This will be Israel's conversion; not a conversion to the Christian faith as now, but to the acknowledgment of the Crucified One as their true Messiah; not by the testimony of His word, but by His personal manifestation, by which the vail will be taken away from their hearts. And then the Lord will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant made at Sinai, but this shall be the covenant that He will make with them. "After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31: 31–34.) "And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." (Amos 9: 15.)

Matt. 23: 38, 39, on which Prof. H. principally relies to prove the Whitbyan dogma of the conversion of the Jews to the Christian faith, is made to subserve that end by severing it from its proper connection, and imposing spiritual meanings upon its terms. The connection of these words of Jesus with the final offer of Himself as the Messiah to the Jewish people, and their rejection of Him, is either not perceived or intentionally ignored; and the house left desolate is interpreted as the temple left spiritually desolate, the seeing Him as a spiritual seeing, and His coming as a spiritual coming. But, when taken in their proper connection, they will not admit of this spiritualizing process, and can only be understood in their natural and grammatical sense. At this last visit of Christ to Jerusalem, He came to them as predicted in Zech. 9: 9, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee; He is just and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass; even upon a colt, the foal of an ass." It was the time of their visitation, but they knew it not, and rejected Him, and plotted His destruction. Hence, He said to them: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." In Jer. 22: 1–5, we find that it was the house of the King of Judah—the tabernacle of David—which, for their disobedience, was made a desolation, and it was a desolation at the time Christ spoke these words, which announced to them that, as a consequence of their not receiving Him, it should be left desolate until His second coming to "raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and raise up its ruins, and build it as in the days of old." (Amos 9: 11.) And then "the stone which the builders refused shall become the headstone of the corner," and the nation shall receive Him, saying: "Blessed be He that

Digitized by Google

cometh in the name of the Lord." (Ps. 118: 22-26.)

Then, too, when the Lord shall raise up the tabernacle of David and re-establish His throne, and sit upon it, and reign over the house of Jacob forever; all His saints—the true Church—the election—the spiritual seed of Abraham, or seed of faith—shall be kings and priests with Him in His kingdom. (Dan. 7: 22, 27; Rev. 2: 26, 29; 3: 21; 5: 9, 10.) He will first fulfil the Davidic type of conquest in the subjection of all the nations; breaking them in pieces as a potter's vessel, and remoulding them in one grand empire, of which Israel will be the head. (Ps. 47: 3; Amos 9: 12; Zech. 8: 20, 23.) Then will He also fulfil the Solomon type of peace, in a reign over all the earth for a thousand years—a millennium of blessedness and glory, in which the elect Church will be kings and priests unto God, and Israel will be the chief of the nations in subjection to the saints. But the professing Church will cease; for, in her apostasy and corruption, she will become the Babylon of which the revelator says: "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying: Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." (Rev. 18: 21.)

There has been, in every age or dispensation of grace, a professing Church—a visible organization of worshippers, having the form of godliness, and containing within it a holy seed—an elect remnant, part of the true Church, having not only the form, but also the power of godliness. The professing Church of each age, though at first pure, became corrupt, and by worldliness and error, counteracted the saving power of truth, so that the holy seed decreased, until it became necessary to make a change of dispensation and institute a new order of things. So has passed away the professing Church of each preceding age, and so will pass away the professing Church of this age or dispensation, which, in its sectarian divisions and secular spirit, and unauthorized traditions and idolatrous corruptions, is the most demoralized of all, and destined to utter destruction at the coming of Christ.

But the holy seed—the elect remnant—saved out of all the dispensations and professing churches, and from every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, shall be gathered together, and made one with Christ, as Christ is one with God. This election will be composed of the seed of faith, embracing all believers of the uncircumcision, and all believers of the circumcision according to Rom. 4: 11, 12, who, being Christ's by faith, are, therefore, Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise—heirs in the highest sense—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—made kings and priests unto God, and, in that relation, possessing the kingdom, and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, and all nations, peoples, tongues, and languages shall serve them.

Under their administration, the natural seed of Abraham—Israel after the flesh—will, as subjects, inherit the land of Canaan, according to the promise, and thus the promise will be made sure to both seeds. And Israel will be the chief of the nations upon earth during the Millennium. The Gentiles upon whom the name of the Lord is called, who had belonged to the professing Church, will be joined with them. (Isa. 14: 1.) * *

"THE ERROR OF THE WICKED."

"Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."—2 PET. 3: 17.

IT might be well to inquire, what is this one peculiar "*error of the wicked*," of which the apostle Peter here speaks? He does not speak of all the errors of the wicked in general, but of some one special error of the wicked. Bible expositors in general give us but little or no light on this question—the Scriptures themselves must explain their own meaning and true sense. Doubtless it refers to a certain prevailing heresy which is to be developed and do its work of ruin, more especially in "the last days, just before the world's last great surprise by the sudden and unexpected appearance of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven." This appearing and its consequences are the

Digitized by Google

themes on which the apostle had been dwelling, especially in this last chapter of his second and last letter. It is reasonable to conclude that "the error of the wicked" referred to, is the same that the apostle had before named as connected with his theme. An error so delusive and fatal, that the natural consequence of embracing and promulgating it would be a fall from their "own steadfastness" in the gospel hope. Such being the fact, the warning was needful, and timely given, "Beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." Surely this "error of the wicked" must be a very serious and subtle heresy, which in the "*last days*" would come in direct contflict with the teaching of the holy Scriptures, and be known by the faithful few who should then walk in the light of the Holy Ghost as shining on the sacred word. The origin and nature of this latter day heresy and delusion would then be known by its natural and necessary tendency, which would be general apostasy from the primitive faith, hope, and practice. To those who have ears to hear, the apostle has named what this latter death-dealing heresy would be, so clear, that there is left no room for conjecture or lingering doubt. Hear it: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts." Here are the characters—"walking after their own lusts;" and now, then, what is the *error* of these scoffers? "And saying, where is the promise of His (Christ's) coming? For since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." This is the point of their error and also of their scoffing; this surely must be "*the error of the wicked*," so fatal to all who embrace it, as the apostle designates no other. Strange, very strange that there should be a doubt of this fact on the mind of any honest inquirer after truth. It is, indeed, a fearful thing to dislike, cavil with, and reject "the truth as it is in Jesus." Such cavillers invariably lose their power of hearing with the inner ear, and seeing with the inner eye. There are not wanting such in high positions and high places, the eyes of whose understanding of spiritual things is already hopelessly darkened. On such labor is lost; they seem to have no real capacity to appreciate and feel the force of God's revealed truth when it conflicts with their preconceived notion. Hence the seven times repeated admonition, so significant and startling: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." This teaching is, that there is a class who have no power to hear. Such a fearful condition and want of capacity is brought on by meeting the most precious truth that was ever revealed to mortals with cold indifference, and then still worse trifling with it till the Spirit is grieved away, and all is *dark*. "*Every* word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" is the soul's proper food. There can be no substitute for the Holy Ghost, or for the revealed Word of God—rejecting these, all is lost. Without these, there may be spurious conversions and many formal churches, both of them barriers to true vital godliness.

The great hindrance to the cause of true religion in our day is a mere nominal, formal religion, claiming to be the Church, though organized in numerous forms directly adverse each to the other. Such a state of things the Holy Ghost has foretold by the mouth of the holy prophets and apostles, as characterizing and distinctly marking the last days of the present dispensation. This sad state of things is brought about by the arch-deceiver, in substituting "the error of the wicked" for the truth of God. Thus he succeeded as "the father of lies" even in Paradise. The Jewish Church were so blinded and fallen that they did not discern the signs of the times, and failed to see in Christ each and every distinct characteristic of their Messiah and King, so clearly set forth by their own prophets, and daily read in their synagogues. Therefore they despised, rejected, condemned, and crucified "the Lord of life and glory." A blindness, no less marvellous and ruinous in its results, is foretold as marking the last stage of the Gentile Church, in the last days of the present age. Let us take one example from the many throughout the Scriptures. "This know, also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves,

Digitized by Google

covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than God. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." (2 Tim. 3:1–5.) Such is the gloomy, yet unerring picture of the masses professing and having a form of godliness. Not even the form of it, but *a* form of their own devising, by which they "deceive" and are themselves "deceived." By slow and imperceptible degrees they shall drift away from "the faith once delivered to the saints," substituting for it "the error of the wicked," and, true enough, "shall be turned to fables," and thus join in the general and popular scoffing, "Where is the promise of His coming?" This scoffing is everywhere named and baptized orthodoxy, and promulgated in high places by "blind leaders of the blind." These are "deceiving and being deceived" by the great latter-day heresy, "*my Lord delayeth His coming*," which is either implied or expressed, in a thousand forms, in what is called "Church literature." The need of the personal return of earth's Lord and King as the Second Adam and great Restorer, is stoutly denied by multitudes of those who claim to be the followers of Christ and guides to His flock. Thus His return is neither desired nor loved. The last delusive and unmistakable peace cry, so soothing and welcome to the unsaved, is all abroad. The professed Church of Christ is boastful of her immense resources, in talents, influence, numbers, and wealth. Ministers and people are jubilant with the views of their bright future prospects of subjugating the world to the present type of our common Christianity by human instrumentalities. Were these expectations realized, surely the world would still need to be converted to vital godliness according to Bible standard.

What saith He who knoweth all things, and cannot be deceived, to the Laodicean Church, the type, and through her to the present Gentile Church, the antitype, the last stage of the latter-day Church? "Thus saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God: I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would that thou wert cold or hot. So, then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." *Strange!* "And knowest not." Thus was it in the days of Noah; they knew not what they might have known. And thus shall it be when the Son of Man is revealed, and thus it is at the present day. J. C.

STAR OF THE ADVENT.

THE light from the East shall shine forth,
And the glorious day-star arise;
And our heart's then will leap with a rapture,
At the Advent of Christ from the skies.

Then joy it will come in the morning,
When the darkness of error is past;
Now the darkness but heralds its dawning,
The end of the glories to last.

To last while the light shall forever
Illumine the Heaven of Peace;
And that peace, as it flows like a river,
Shall forever and ever increase.

The Lord shall dwell then in Zion,
Over Jerusalem, city of old;
The Shepherd of Judah's tribe, the Lion,
Shall watch o'er the lambs of His fold.

And the place of His feet shall be glorious;
The place where our God then shall dwell;
And over all foes then victorious,
His glorious triumphs will tell.

And His reign shall extend o'er the seas—
For all nations shall own Him their King;
And the banner of Peace ever wave in the breeze,
While the praise of His glory we'll sing.

The desert shall spring into bloom,
And flowers of beauty expand;
While the softest of breezes shall waft their perfume
Far over Emanuel's land.

Digitized by Google

All hail! For that star shall arise
And herald the glorious morn;
And that star shall forever remain in the skies,
The herald of Jesus once born.

And this child shall be called Mighty God,
The glorious councillor of Peace;
The wonderful Prince, with inflexible rod,
Whose Government never shall cease.

T. D.

Selections.

SHRINKING FROM CHRIST'S COMING.

Before Christ came, the faithful remnant of Israel were consoled with the promise that "their eyes should see" Him, who was to be their "salvation." "Unto you that fear My Name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings." Yet it is observable that the prophecy, though cheering and encouraging, had with it something of an awful character too. First, it was said, "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in." Yet it is soon added, "But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap."*

The same mixture of fear with comfort is found in the disciples after His resurrection. The women departed from the sepulchre "with fear and great joy." They "trembled and were amazed: neither said they anything to any man, for they were afraid." The Apostles "were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." "They believed not for joy, and wondered." And our Lord said to them, "why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" On another occasion, "none of the disciples durst ask Him, who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord."† It might be from slowness to believe, or from misconception, or from the mere perplexity of amazement, but so it was; they exulted, and they were awed.

Still more remarkable is the account of our Lord's appearance to St. John in the Book of Revelation; more remarkable because St. John had no doubt or perplexity. Christ had ascended; the Apostle had received the gift of the Holy Ghost; yet he "fell at His feet as dead."

This reflection leads us on to a parallel thought concerning the state and prospects of all Christians in every age. We too are looking out for Christ's coming,—we are bid look out, we are bid pray for it; and yet it is to be a time of judgment. It is to be the deliverance of all saints from sin and sorrow forever; yet they, every one of them, must undergo an awful trial. How then can any look forward to it with joy?

And the difficulty is increased when we come to pray for it,—to pray for its coming soon: how can we pray that Christ would come, that the day of judgment would hasten, that His kingdom would come, that His kingdom may be at once,—may come on us this day or to-morrow,—when by so coming He would be shortening the time of our present life, and cut off those precious years given us for conversion, amendment, repentance, and sanctification? Is there not an inconsistency in professing to wish our Judge already come, when we do not feel ourselves ready for Him? In what sense can we really and heartily pray that He would cut short the time, when our conscience tells us that, even were our life longest, we should have much to do in a few years?

I do not deny that there is some difficulty in the question, but surely not more so than there is on every side of us in religious matters. Religion has (as it were) its very life in what are paradoxes and contradictions in the eye of reason. It is a seeming inconsistency how we

* Mal. 4:2; 3:1, 2.

† Matt. 28:8. Mark 16:8. Luke 24:37, 38. John 21:12.

Digitized by Google

can pray for Christ's coming, yet wish time to "work out our salvation," and "make our calling and election sure." It was a seeming contradiction, how good men were to desire His first coming, yet be unable to abide it; how the Apostles feared, yet rejoiced after His resurrection. And so it is-a paradox how the Christian should in all things be sorrowful yet always rejoicing, and dying yet living, and having nothing yet possessing all things. Such seeming contradictions arise from the want of depth in our minds to master the whole truth. We have not eyes keen enough to follow out the lines of God's providence and will, which meet at length, though at first sight they seem parallel.

I will now try to explain how these opposite duties of fearing yet praying to have the sight of Christ are not necessarily inconsistent with each other. Why we should fear it, is not strange. Surely when a man gets himself steadily to contemplate a state of things beyond this life, he is in the way to be overpowered by the thoughts which throng upon him. How dreadful to the imagination is every scene of that unknown hereafter! This life indeed is full of dangers and pains, but we know what they are like; we do not know what shall be in the world to come. "Lord, whither goest Thou?" said the Apostles; "we know not whither Thou goest." Supposing a man told that he should suddenly be carried off to some unknown globe in the heavens, this is the kind of trouble in its least fearful shape, which the future presents, when dwelt upon. And still more trying is the peculiar prospect which presents itself of Christ's coming in judgment. What a prospect, to be judged for all our doings by an unerring Judge. Try to trace back the history of your life in memory, and fancy every part of it confessed by you in words before some intimate friend, how great would be your shame! but how gladly would you in that day resign yourself to a disclosure to a fellow-sinner, how gladly to a disclosure to a world of sinners, compared with the presence of an All-holy, All-seeing Creator with His eyes upon you, "beholding you," as the Gospel speaks of Him in the days of His flesh,—and one deed of evil after another told forth, while all your best actions and best qualities fade away and become as discolored and unsightly as if there were nothing good in them. I do not presume to say that all this will happen; but this is what is meant by a judgment in the earthly sense of the word; and that awful trial is surely not called a judgment for nothing, but that we may gain some ideas from it. Think of all this, and you will not deny that the thought of standing before Christ is enough to make us tremble. And yet His presence is held out to us by Himself as the greatest of good; all Christians are bound to pray for it, to pray for its hastening; to pray that we may speedily look on Him whom none can see "without holiness," none but "the pure in heart;"—and now the question is, how can we pray for it with sincerity?

1. Now first, though we could not at all reconcile our feelings about ourselves with the command given us, still it is our duty to obey the latter on faith. If Abraham could lift up his knife to slay his son, we may well so far subdue our fears as to pray for what nevertheless is terrible. Job said, "Though He slay me, yet I will trust in Him." Under all circumstances surely, we may calmly resign ourselves into His hands. Can we suppose that He would deceive us? deal unkindly or hardly with us? Can He make use of us, if I may say so, against ourselves? Let us not so think of the most merciful Lord. Let us do what He bids, and leave the rest to Him. Thus, I say, we might reason with ourselves, if nothing else could be said.

2. But next, I observe, that when we pray for the coming of Christ, we do but pray in the Church's words, that He would "*accomplish the number* of His elect and would hasten His kingdom." That is, we do not pray that He would simply cut short the world, but, so to express myself, that He would make time go quicker, and the wheels of His chariot speed on. Before He comes, a certain space must be gone over; all the saints must be gathered in; and each saint must be matured. Not a grain must fall to the ground; not an ear of corn must lose its due rain and sunshine. All we pray is, that He would please to crowd all this

Digitized by Google

into a short space of time; that He would "finish the work and cut it short *in righteousness*," and "make a short work upon the earth;" that He would accomplish,—not curtail, but fulfil,—the circle of His saints, and hasten the age to come without disordering this. Indeed it cannot be otherwise. All God's works are in place and season; they are all complete. As in nature, the structure of its minutest portions is wrought out to perfection, and an insect is as wonderful as Leviathan; so when in His providence He seems to hurry, He still keeps time, and moves upon the deep harmonies of truth and love. When then we pray that He would come, we pray also that we may be ready; that all things may converge and meet in Him; that He may draw us while He draws near us, and make us the holier the closer He comes. We pray that we may not fear that which at present we justly do fear; "that when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming."* He can condense into an hour a life of trial. He who frames the worlds in a moment, and creates generations by the breath of His mouth, and melts, and hardens, and deluges, and dries up the solid rocks in a day, and makes bones to live, grow, and die, and buries them in the earth, and changes them into stone, apart from time and at His mere will, more wondrously can He deal with the world of spirits, who are never subject to the accidents of matter. He can by one keen pang of agony punish the earthly soul, or by one temptation justify it, or by one vision glorify it. Adam fell in a moment; Abraham was justified upon his seizing the knife; Moses lost Canaan for a word; David said, "I have sinned," and was forgiven; Solomon gained wisdom in a dream; Peter made one confession and received the keys; our Lord baffled Satan in three sentences; He redeemed us in the course of a day; He regenerates us by a form of words. We know not how "fearfully and wonderfully" our souls "are made." To men in sleep, in drowning, or in excitement, moments are as years. They suddenly become other men, nature or grace dispensing with time.

3. But again, you say, How can I pray to see Christ, who am so unclean? You say well that you are unclean. But in what time do you propose to become otherwise? Do you expect in this life ever to be clean? Yes, in one sense, by the presence of the Holy Ghost within you; but that presence we trust you have now. But if by "clean," you mean free from that infection of nature, the least drop of which is sufficient to dishonor all your services, clean you never will be till you have paid the debt of sin, and lose that body which Adam has begotten. Be sure that the longer you live, and the holier you become, you will only perceive that misery more clearly. The less of it you have, the more it will oppress you; its full draught does but confuse and stupefy you; as you come to yourself, your misery begins. The more your soul becomes one with Him who deigns to dwell within it, the more it sees with His eyes. You dare not pray for His presence now;—would you pray for it had you lived Methuselah's years? I trow not. You will never be good enough to desire it; no one in the whole Church prays for it except on conditions implied. To the end of the longest life you are still a beginner. What Christ asks of you is not sinlessness, but diligence. Had you lived ten times your present age, ten times more service would be required of you. Every day you live longer, more will be required. If He were to come to-day, you would be judged up to to-day. Did He come to-morrow, you would be judged up to to-morrow. Were the time put off a year, you would have a year more to answer for. You cannot elude your destiny, you cannot get rid of your talent; you are to answer for your opportunities, whatever they may be, not more nor less. You cannot be profitable to Him even with the longest life; you can show faith and love in an hour. True it is, if you have turned from Him, and served sin, and in proportion as you have done this, you have a great work before you,—to undo what you have done. If you have given years to Satan, you have a double duty, to repent as well as to work; but even then you may pray without

* 1 John 22 : 28.

Digitized by Google

dread; for in praying for His presence you still are praying, as I have said, to be ready for it.

4. But once more. You ask, how you can make up your mind to stand before your Lord and God? I ask in turn, how do you bring yourself to come before Him now day by day?—for what is this but meeting Him? Consider what it is you mean by praying, and you will see that, at that very time that you are asking for the coming of His kingdom you are anticipating that coming, and accomplishing the thing you fear. When you pray, you come into His presence. Now reflect on yourself, what your feelings are in coming. They are these: you seem to say,—I am in myself nothing but a sinner, a man of unclean lips and earthly heart. I am not worthy to enter into His presence. I am not worthy of the least of all His mercies. I know He is All-holy, yet I come before Him; I place myself under His pure and piercing eyes, which look me through and through, and discern every trace and every motion of evil within me. Why do I do so? First of all, for this reason. To whom should I go? What can I do better? Who is there in the whole world that can help me? Who that will care for me, or pity me, or have any kind thought of me, if I cannot obtain it of Him? I know He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; but I know again that He is All-merciful, and that He so sincerely desires my salvation that He has died for me. Therefore, though I am in a great strait, I will rather fall into His hands, than into those of any creature. True it is I could find creatures more like myself, imperfect or sinful; it might seem better to betake myself to some of these who have power with God, and to beseech them to interest themselves for me. But no; somehow I cannot content myself with this;—no, terrible as it is, I had rather go to God alone. I have an instinct within me which leads me to rise and go to my Father, to name the Name of His well-beloved Son, and having named it, to place myself unreservedly in His hands, saying, "If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? But there is forgivenes with Thee."—This is the feeling in which we come to confess our sins, and to pray to God for pardon and grace day by day; and observe, it is the very feeling in which we must prepare to meet Him when He comes visibly. Why, even children of this world can meet a judicial process and a violent death with firmness. I do not say that we must have aught of their pride or their self-trusting tranquillity. And yet there is a certain composure and dignity which become us who are born of immortal seed, when we come before our Father. If indeed we have habitually lived to the world, then truly it is natural we should attempt to fly from Him whom we have pierced. Then may we well call on the mountains to fall on us, and on the hills to cover us. But if we have lived, however imperfectly, yet habitually, in His fear, if we trust that His Spirit is in us, then we need not be ashamed before Him. We shall then come before Him, as now we come to pray—with profound abasement, with awe, with self-renunciation, still as relying upon the Spirit which He has given us, with our faculties about us, with a collected and determined mind, and with hope. He who cannot pray for Christ's coming, ought not in consistency to pray at all.

I have spoken of coming to God in prayer generally; but if this is awful, much more is coming to Him in the sacrament of Holy communion; for this is in very form an anticipation of His coming, a near presence of Him in earnest of it. And a number of men feel it to be so; for, for one reason or another, they never come before Him in that most Holy Ordinance, and so deprive themselves of the highest of blessings here below. Thus their feeling is much the same as theirs would be, who from fear of His coming, did not dare look out for it. They indeed who are in the religious practice of communicating, understand well enough how it is possible to feel afraid and yet to come. Surely it is possible, and the case is the same as regards the future day of Christ. You must tremble, and yet pray for it. We have all of us experienced enough even of this life, to know that the same seasons are often most joyful and also most painful. Instances of this must suggest themselves to all men. Consider the loss of friends, and say whether

Digitized by Google

joy and grief, triumph and humiliation, are not strangely mingled, yet both really preserved. The joy does not change the grief, nor the grief the joy, into some third feeling; they are incommunicable with each other, both remain, both affect us. Or consider the mingled feelings, with which a son obtains forgiveness of a father,—the soothing thought that all displeasure is at an end, the veneration, the love, and all the indescribable emotions, most pleasurable, which cannot be put into words,—yet his bitterness against himself. Such is the temper in which we desire to come to the Lord's table; such in which we must pray for His coming; such in which His elect will stand before Him when He comes.

5. Lastly, let me say more distinctly what I already alluded to, that in that solemn hour we shall have, if we be His, the inward support of His Spirit too, carrying us on towards Him, and "witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God." God is mysteriously threefold; and while He remains in the highest heaven, He comes to judge the world;—and while He judges the world, He is in us also, bearing us up and going forth in us to meet Himself. God the Son is without, but God the Spirit is within,—and when the Son asks, the Spirit will answer. That Spirit is vouchsafed to us here; and if we yield ourselves to His gracious influences, so that He draws up our thoughts and wills to heavenly things, and becomes one with us, He will assuredly be still in us and give us confidence at the Day of Judgment. He will be with us, and strengthen us; and how great His strength is, what mind of man can conceive? Gifted with that supernatural strength, we may be able to lift up our eyes to our Judge when he looks on us, and look on Him in turn, though with deep awe, yet without confusion of face, as if in the consciousness of innocence.

That hour must come at length upon every one of us. When it comes, may the countenance of the Most Holy quicken, not consume us; may the flame of judgment be to us only what it was to the three holy children, over whom the fire had no power!

HEALING SLIGHTLY.

One of the growing characteristics of the day, is an unwillingness to be put upon inquiry into the propriety of the opinions we hold, or the conduct we maintain; and another characteristic consequent on this one, is the timidity in reproving, or the disposition to extenuate or explain away sins widely prevalent and deeply intrenched. The moral deterioration of public sentiment,—the debauch of what we may term the public conscience, which is thus denoted, bodes incalculable evil.

It is impossible for those who are set for the defence of the Gospel to stand against the tide, and maintain their own position on the rock, unless they oppose themselves firmly and distinctly to whatsoever warreth against the truth. Placed as they are to give direction and type to religious thought, any indecision or apparent indifference on their part will serve as positive impetus to that which is evil. The morbid sensibility which repels the application of truth to the conscience is not to be healed by wrapping the sword of the Spirit so as to prevent its piercing to the quick, to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. The ministry must not deal falsely, nor yield compliance from fear of giving offence by faithfulness and directness of testimony. Neither can the public mind be reclaimed, and the old paths restored without plainness and frankness. It would be hard to produce the conviction that things were much at fault by using pointless speech. To withhold or modify testimony lest it give personal offence, is to revolutionize the whole character of the ministry as commissioned to speak in Christ's stead. To "cry aloud and spare not," to practise the surgery of the word, is often the only safe method of treating the case. "Boldness to speak of the word," will much more powerfully commend the truth, by manifesting its authority to the conscience, and thus forestall the narrow, selfish view which rejects the truth as a personal offence. Let the people be instructed in the importance of coming to the light, that their deeds may be made manifest whether they are wrought in God. A properly enlightened conscience will move the Christian to confession, and lead to brokenness of heart, rather than to affront and resentment.

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

BABYLON.

The 18th chapter of Revelation, in which the fall of Babylon is described, is one of the most sublime in the sacred volume. It stands near the close of this wonderful book, and the description evidently belongs to the final scenes of the mighty drama the aged seer was summoned to witness. It may well therefore claim our most serious attention. What does Babylon here represent? And what is to be her doom?

It is a very common interpretation among Protestants to apply this passage to the downfall of the Papacy. Babylon, say they, means Rome. "That is, the great harlot church which has proved faithless to the Lord, and prostituted herself to the kings of the earth." There is ground for this application. Doubtless that Church is included.

But woe be to those who, with a keen eye for other's heresies and crimes, fail to observe their own. There is no other wickedness more severely denounced in the Bible than Phariseeism. And it is to be feared that Protestants in their denunciations of Rome, are often guilty of this sin. Not that the wrongs of that system must be excused. But "let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." "Be not high-minded, but fear."

The term "Babylon," here, is broad enough to include all the worldliness and pride and wickedness of Protestant, as well as Papal Christendom. Infidelity is even more heinous than superstition. And the worship of mammon is no less idolatrous, and even more debasing than the worship of man.

That this description cannot refer *exclusively* to the approaching downfall of the Papal system, is manifest from the terms. For Babylon here spoken of is a great commercial emporium, as well as an ecclesiastical centre. At her fall, the merchants of the earth weep and mourn, "for no man buyeth their merchandise any more." "And every ship-master, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stand afar off and behold the smoke of her burning, and cast dust on their heads, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas! alas! that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her costliness! For in one hour is she made desolate." That this description cannot, without great compression, be confined to the Papal system, and to Rome as the chief seat of it, is manifest. Rome never was, and is not now, a great commercial mart. Nor would the overthrow of that system seriously disturb the commerce of the world. That commerce is chiefly in the hands of Protestant nations. The great merchants of the earth are to be found among them.

To ascertain the true meaning of this mystical term, "Babylon," it is necessary to go back in the Scripture record. The promise of a coming kingdom of God, is as old as the fall. On the occurrence of that calamity the subordinate dominion of the earth passed into the hands of Satan. He became "the prince of this world." And his endeavor, from the outset, has been to organize and perfect the human race, in opposition to the kingdom of God. The first attempt in this direction was on the plains of Shinar. Kingdom power on the earth was made to centre in Nimrod, the mighty hunter. Here was the beginning of the Babylonian empire. In arrogance, and with heaven-defying spirit, it was commenced at the tower of Babel. The germ of the kingdom of God, was deposited in Abraham and his seed. The kingdom power of this world was centred in Babylon. And through all its changes and vicissitudes, whether its seat were on the banks of the Nile, or at Nineveh, it remained the same world power. As the kingdom of Israel began to decline, Babylon the great antagonistic kingdom of this world was allowed to wax into greatness. It became the great foe of the Jewish nation already proven faithless and apostate, and God used it as his scourge

Digitized by Google

against them. The destruction of the Holy City and temple, the deportation of the people by Nebuchadnezzar, as slaves to Babylon, closes the independent existence of the Jews as a nation, and winds up the trial God had made of their worthiness of kingdom power in the earth. Henceforth, the dominion of the world is allowed to pass over without restriction to Babylon. Hence, in the Old Testament prophets, Babylon is always spoken of as the great foe of the covenant people, and as the representative of the grandeur and power of the world. And although it is said in Daniel that this greatness and dominion was intrusted to the monarch of that empire by God, yet it is very plainly foretold that he should prove in every way unworthy of the trust, and provoke a judgment all the more severe, by reason of the height from which he should fall; this abuse of trust was especially manifest in the attempt to compel all men to worship the golden image set up on the plain of Dura, since the prophets of that age, and especially Daniel, were commissioned to foretell the downfall of Babylon. And some of them, Isaiah particularly, speak of this overthrow in such terms as are appropriate to the judgment of the great day of the Lord.

It is worthy of remark, that our Saviour in the 24th chapter of Matthew, speaking of the last times, and John, in this chapter, both borrow their imagery largely from the ancient prophets. And it must be borne in mind that this great world empire, of which Babylon was the chief seat, in the days of these prophets, is represented as having a continuous existence, although transferred from the hands of one power to another. Whether Tyrus, or Medo-Persia, or Greece, or Rome, is the immediate subject of prophecy, in the wide sense, these are only varying forms of the same great Babylon. And this explains why Isaiah's prophecy reaches forward and connects itself with the scenes of the last great day of the Lord. It is because Babylon, as the great embodiment of the world's splendor and dominion, and the great antagonistic power to the kingdom of God, lives on, through all these phases, to the very last. The same thing is indicated in Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the golden image. That image stands in all its pride, up to the very time of the coming of that kingdom which shall utterly destroy and supplant it.

Bearing all this in mind, remembering the fact that ancient Babylon was the first centre around which the power of this world was aggrandized, remembering its relation of antagonism to God's ancient people, and its representative character, as the exponent of all those state fabrics which now occupy the sphere and usurp the prerogatives of the coming kingdom, we are at no loss to determine the sense in which it is here used by the revealing angel. Babylon stands here as the typical name for all worldly dominion, and especially for that great world-fabric, which in all ages, Satan has pushed into the place of the promised kingdom of Heaven. He even tried to induce the Lord Jesus to take the crown of this world's empire. He would thus forever have delayed that kingdom which shall uproot and destroy his own.

In this sense, the primary fulfilment of this chapter was the downfall of the Roman Empire. In the days of the Apostles, pagan Rome was the highest exponent of Babylon the great. But the prophecy manifestly reaches much farther. As we have said, Babylon remains, whatever particular phase of it may come to its doom. So, after the fall of Rome, the kingdom power of this world assumed a new and still more dangerous form for the Church. The Church became incorporated with the State. And so the pretence of this new phase of worldly power to be the real kingdom of God, was more specious than ever. Then the professing Church readily submitted to the claim. Papal Rome arrogated to itself all the emoluments and functions of the true kingdom on the earth. Hence, in this new phase, Babylon the great became the mystery of iniquity, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk. That is, they were stupefied and sensualized in all their views of the kingdom of Heaven. They hailed an earthly system in place of the heavenly.

Digitized by Google

Babylon the great then, doubtless, includes the Papal system. But, with the decline of the Romish power, we can detect a new phase of the same old Babylon rising into greatness, and about to demand supremacy in the earth. We refer to that form of dominion developed especially now in Protestant nations, which is, if possible, a still more artful substitute for the coming kingdom. It is the kingdom of worldly culture, and civilization, and scientific progress, and inventive art, which is rapidly accumulating its resources, and preparing to effect the promised regeneration without any such intervention as the appearing and kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. It proposes to disenthrall and elevate mankind by free institutions and social reforms. It promises to subsidize and apply all material forces to promote the prosperity and happiness of men. It is the kingdom of modern civilization, about which so much boast is made, even by men who profess to be Christians, and who ought to know that the coming regeneration cannot be effected in that way. For it ignores the necessity of a new birth of the Spirit and the power of the resurrection of Jesus. It is, after all, another attempt to permanently improve and exalt man on the basis of his fleshly, natural life, which all Scripture denounces as corrupt, and which all past experience proves incapable of such improvement.

This is the form in which Babylon the great is being now developed. And this, we believe, will be the last form in which it is to be revealed before the divine polity and kingdom of the future, the new Jerusalem, comes to sight. And it is this last form which is eminently in the mind of the angel in the revelation of this chapter. Here we see why Babylon is represented as the great mart of trade and commerce, as the gathered storehouse of all delicacies, and luxury, and wealth. And why, also, it is still represented as a harlot? For we are persuaded, the harlotry of the Protestant Church with this new form of Babylonish greatness will be just as conspicuous and complete as was that of the Roman Church in the Middle Ages. We already see painful evidence of this. But the Romish Church will not be behind in her spiritual whoredom with this new idol. She is not yet off the stage. And, as soon as she finds that homage at this altar is the only way to retain her power in the earth, she, too, will bow low before the golden image. Perhaps she will, in this way, advance her claim to be recognized again as the Universal Church. And here we naturally recall what we have said before about Antichrist. This new form of world power of which we speak, is to be at last headed up in what will be virtually a universal empire, in which the ideas of this modern age will be embodied, and over which "the spirit of the age," another name for the god of this world, will preside. This will be the Antichristian empire of the last days. Its personal head will be Antichrist. In him will be summed up the power and culture of the world. Babylon will be greater than ever at the last, and all the symbolic character of Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar will be then fulfilled. The golden image set up on the plains of Dura will be fulfilled in the homage Antichrist will exact from all men, as the true Messiah of the human race, the world's Saviour. All must worship the beast, and submit to his mark and the number of his name, or all privileges of trade will be denied them, and even life itself be forfeited. The image of Nebuchadnezzar's vision, with its head of gold, its breast and arms of silver, its thighs of brass, and legs of iron, summing up in itself all riches and strength, political wisdom joined with military power—absolute despotism, yet standing on the clay and iron feet of the popular will—this, also, will be then fulfilled. And the overweening pride of Nebuchadnezzar, who gave not God the glory, will be more than realized in him who shall palm himself off upon the world as the divine man, the lofty exponent of that incarnation of God in man, of which the whole human race is the subject; for such is the theory of modern pantheistic philosophy. He will be the founder of the Church of humanity for which such writers as Comte and Renan declare the world is fast preparing, the true Christian Church which must supplant, in their view, the narrow sect which now usurps the name of Christ. And hence we see how this

Digitized by Google

new form of Babylon will still deserve the name of mystery of iniquity, mother of harlots. For a large proportion of the visible Church, Popish and Protestant, will be deceived by these pretensions and be dazzled by their success, until the religion of Antichrist has displaced, in many an ecclesiastical fabric, the religion of Jesus. Here we have the last and highest form attained by the Babylon of this world. An empire world-wide in its reach, assuming to act the part of a universal providence to man, and erecting on the foundations of the visible Church the new religion of humanity, the very essence of which is the denial of the world's need and the obliteration of its hope of God's king, the coming Man, the Lord Jesus from heaven. And this empire is even now fast preparing. The body of Antichrist is forming, and limb is being joined to limb. Whether the man who shall head up the system has yet appeared on the stage or not, it is premature to say. But all the elements of this last form of kingdom power on the earth are actively at work. The world even now sighs, and groans, and staggers in blood for a universal empire. Nation jostles against nation, till the cry is: Give us union, and mutual help, and peace, instead of ceaseless jarring, and warring, and menace. Let us go to and build us a fabric that will hand down our name to all time, and under the shadow of which, all nations may dwell safely. The *divine ideal* of government is an absolute, universal monarchy. Republics have been thought of, only because the men who have ruled have been bad. But give us a man strong enough, and wise enough, and good enough, and we will give all power into his hands. The world is in search of such a man. It has not yet found him. But the devil is making ready a man to supply the want. And, when found, men will do homage to him as to a God. But God has such a man in reserve too, even the second Man, the Lord Jesus, the anointed Head of His kingdom, through whose rule He shall bless the world as long as the sun and the moon endure. But first, He will suffer men to take the devil's king, because they want him; because they prefer him. He will let them groan under his tyranny, that they may be filled with the fruit of their own devices, and reap as they have sown. But blessed be His name, He will not suffer Antichrist always to sit on the throne promised to His Son, nor allow Babylon to sit as a queen where His own Church, His chosen bride, is promised the inheritance. And hence, in this chapter there is revealed the fall of this last great form of the world-power. Babylon goes down, no more to appear, and the holy city, the heavenly Jerusalem, the seat of that celestial polity and kingdom of the future, comes down to bless all nations with its light and rule, and, henceforth, they walk in its light, and bring their glory and honor to its gates forever.

And now, dear reader, in which will you cast in your lot—Babylon or the kingdom of God? The kingdom which is soon to fall, or that one which cannot be moved? The city over which the clouds of God's wrath are gathering, or that city which is to come, whose builder and maker is God, and which He will fill with His light and joy forever? B.

DR. SEISS ON THE APOCALYPSE.

The Fifteenth Lecture of this course, delivered March 7th, was on the sealing of the 144,000. The ground taken was, that these persons are descendants of the sons of the Patriarch Jacob, living in the period of the Judgment; that they do not represent the Church, nor all the saved out of the Jewish tribes, but a peculiar company living upon the earth at the same time, and sealed by an extraordinary impartation of the Holy Ghost, the seal of the miracle-working God, for their personal safety in the midst of the judgment plagues.

The most striking designation of these 144,000, was drawn from a joining together of the meanings of their several tribal names, showing them to be confessors and praisers of God, viewing the Son as never before, a band of blessed ones, wrestling with forgetfulness, hearing and obeying the word, cleaving unto the award of a shelter and home, an addition or supplement to the Church proper, sons of the right hand of God, begotten in the extremity of the age.

The Fourth Number of this work, containing this and three other Lectures, is now being printed, and will be ready for delivery in a few weeks.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VII. MAY, 1869. No. 5.

Special Contributions.

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH.

(Continued from page 53.)

THERE are two theories of the conversion of the Jews to the Christian faith; one which couples with it their national restoration to their own land, and exaltation to leadership in the conversion of the world; another, which denies their national restoration, and simply adds them, individually, to the Christian Church, which is regarded as a continuance of Israel. Both views are erroneous, and are results of Origen's method of interpreting the Scriptures, by substituting human fancies in their place. Prof. H. adopts the latter view, and controverts the former. Having shown that his theory is untenable, and having presented the Scripture doctrines respecting Israel and the Church, we might have dismissed the whole subject, were it not that, from his language, some might confound the former theory, which he controverts, with Millenarianism, and imagine that he has presented some valid objections against it. According to both these theories, the Millennium is to be nothing more than an appendix to the Christian dispensation—a period of a thousand years prior to the coming of Christ, in which the Christian religion will be predominant through all the earth, and the nations conform to its teachings. And this prosperous state of the Christian Church is the promised reign of Christ over all the earth, understood in a spiritual sense. If this spiritual-reign hypothesis, in which both concur, could be established, it would be of little consequence which of these theories should be entertained, the difference between them relating merely to a minor point of temporary duration, and the final result, in either case, being the same. In reviewing some of the Professor's arguments against the first theory, then, our object is not to defend it, but to show that, so far as his expositions bear against the pre-milleunial advent and personal reign of Christ, they are unsound.

In commenting on Luke 21:24, "And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," he regards the term *εθνων* as designating the heathen, as distinguished from christianized nations; and their times, he says, "can only be the times during which God suffers the heathen to tread down Jerusalem," and "will come to an end when the heathen are converted, according to the announcement in Rom. 11:25, that 'the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought into the kingdom of God;' or when their power has been overthrown by the Divine judgments, and a Christian dominion has been established in its place."

This exposition is, we think, unwarranted by any sound principle of exegesis. Jesus was predicting the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews, and said: "They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; *εθνη*, here evidently meaning all the Gentiles, as distinguished from the Jews, and must have the same meaning in the next member of the sentence. Besides, there were no christianized nations at that time from which the *εθνων* could be distinguished, and the disciples could not have understood Him as making any such distinction. The distinction is, therefore, arbitrary and far-fetched. Furthermore, the expo-

Digitized by Google

sition falsifies the text, for, as he says, "the treading down of Jerusalem by the heathen has already twice ceased—once under Constantine, and once in the time of the Crusades, when a Christian kingdom existed at Jerusalem:" whereas Jesus evidently predicted the treading down of Jerusalem by the *εθνων* continuously, until their times should be fulfilled or completed.

The phrase, "times of the Gentiles," too, surely cannot mean what the Professor says it does, for then the declaration would signify that Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the heathen until the heathen are done treading it down; or, otherwise expressed, the heathen shall possess Jerusalem until the times of their possession comes to an end. Such an exposition is too frivolous to be entertained for a moment. The phrase undoubtedly has an important meaning in connection with the Divine dispensations, and can only relate to the times of mercy to the Gentiles, wherein God is visiting them to take out of them a people for His name, after which Christ will return and raise up the tabernacle of David from its desolations. (Acts 15:13–16.) Times of which Paul speaks, Rom. 11:25, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." The word *πληρωμα*, rendered fulness, has, among other significations, the meaning of *a supplement which fills up—a complement necessary to make up the whole.* In this place it cannot mean all the Gentiles, but only the complement of the Gentiles which God is taking out of them to complete the elect Church, in the place of the unbelieving Jews. And the times of the Gentiles are the times in which this will be effected, and at the termination of which the Gentile domination in Jerusalem shall cease, and possession will be given to the Jews. And this event—the revival of Jewish nationality—will be to the elect Church a sign that their redemption draweth nigh, and that the kingdom of God is at hand. (Luke 21:28–31.) It is, then, neither to converted Jews, nor to Christian nations, that the dominion of Jerusalem will be given at the termination of the Gentile times, but to unconverted Jews, nationally restored, who shall possess it during the dispensation of Christ's coming, when His saints shall be with Him in the air.

On Acts 1:6–8, he asserts that whatever the apostles understood by Israel, in their question, "Lord, wilt thou, at this time, restore again the kingdom to Israel?" the Lord, in His answer, "puts into the term Israel the higher Scriptural idea" of the Christian Church; and that when this Israel shall have been gathered from the Jews and heathen, the kingdom will be bestowed upon Him—the kingdom of glory described in Rev. 21 and 22—without any trace of preference of the Jews.

But he has not proved that the term Israel has this meaning. That Gentile proselytes were added to Israel in old times, does not prove it; and that Gentiles are to be added to Israel in the future, does not prove it; that the wicked rulers and people of Israel, in old times, are metaphorically styled princes of Sodom and people of Gomorrah, does not prove it; that John the Baptist and Jesus warned the Jews not to trust in their natural relation to Abraham, does not prove it; that the elect remnant of Israel is called the Israel of God, in contradistinction from Israel after the flesh, does not prove it; that the elect from the Gentiles are said to be no more foreigners and strangers, but fellow-citizens of the saints and of the house of God, does not prove it. In short, not one passage of Scripture, adduced in his elaborate argument on this subject, shows that the term Israel ever stands for the Christian Church. The argument is a fine specimen of special pleading, having no Scripture testimony to sustain it. The question assumes it as an indisputable point, that the kingdom shall be restored to Israel. The answer does not controvert it, or imply anything to the contrary. It only asserts that the Father hath reserved the knowledge of the time thereof to himself. The restoration itself is clearly taught in the Scriptures, one jot or tittle of which shall not pass till all be fulfilled. (See Isa. 1:24–26; 60:1–22; Jer. 23:5–8; Hos. 3:4, 5; Micah 4:1–8; Zeph. 3:13–20; Isa. 9:6, 7; Luke 1:30, 33.) What, therefore, Jesus in Matt. 19:28,

Digitized by Google

promises to His disciples is, that in this regeneration or restoration, when He shall sit on the throne of His glory—the throne of His father David, they also shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The language is unequivocal, and its meaning plain. And the Professor asserts, without proof, that the term "twelve tribes of Israel" means the entire Christian Church. Neither is the regeneration a restoration to the condition described in Gen. 1, but the end purposed of God, which could not be effected by the original constitution of the world, because of Adam's sin, but which will be effected by the plan of redemption in Christ Jesus, even the establishment of a Divine kingdom over all the earth, to be administered by Christ and His saints, and in which Israel is to be restored to their own land, and become the first of the nations in natural flesh. It will be in the new heavens and new earth, as promised. (Isa. 65 : 17–25, and Rev. 21.) And the new Jerusalem, as seen descending from God out of heaven, is the Bride, the Lamb's wife; *i. e.*, a symbol of the saints, who shall constitute the polity of that kingdom.

In Acts 3:19, 20, the Professor says, "the times of refreshing are identical with the regeneration;" and "that the detailed description thereof is given in Rev. 21 and 22, is as certain as that its advent is set forth as contemporaneous with the reappearance of Christ," in which we agree. But he denies that either has anything to do with the thousand years' reign, or the supposed glory "of the kingdom of Israel," and says: "Were we to suppose it to precede the 'thousand years' kingdom,' Christ would be besieged in the beloved city by Gog and Magog (Rev. 20 : 9), and we should be compelled to imagine a second passion," from which we dissent. He gives a rendering of the text, differing from the common English version, but we shall notice both, and show their argument with the Scriptural doctrine of Christ's premillennial advent. According to the common English version, Peter exhorts the Jews to "repent and be converted, that their sins may be blotted out, *when* the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, etc.," which imports that though their sins would be forgiven when they repented, they would not be blotted out until the coming of the Lord; for as death is the penalty of sin, so long as the saints remain under the penalty of death, it cannot be said that their sins are blotted out. Their forgiveness, however, insures their being blotted out. For all who by repentance toward God and faith in Christ obtain forgiveness of their sins, shall have part in the first resurrection, in which mortal shall put on immortality, corruption shall put on incorruption, and their vile bodies shall be changed, that they may be fashioned like Christ's glorious body, and every trace of sin be blotted out. And this will take place at the return of Christ to raise up the tabernacle of David, and establish his kingdom forever. Then the dead in Christ shall rise first, and the living in Christ shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. And when He shall appear, they shall also appear with Him in glory, and reign with Him in His kingdom. So this blotting out of their sins must necessarily precede the manifestation of the sons of God.

According to the other rendering, Peter exhorts the Jews to "repent and be converted, that their sins may be blotted out, that refreshings may come from the presence of the Lord, etc., which imports that the refreshing would come as a consequent of their repentance and conversion; the blotting out of their sins being a concurrent event. This was addressed to the Jews before the calling of the Gentiles; for it was necessary that the Gospel should first be preached to the Jews; and had they repented and believed, it would not as now have been sent to the Gentiles; for through their unbelief salvation is come to the Gentiles. And had they believed, the times of refreshing would probably have speedily followed. And Peter, in his exhortation, seems to imply this. Their unbelief, however, has occasioned the delay of the times of refreshing until the Gentile complement shall be brought in. And then the Lord will come the second time without sin unto salvation. The times of refreshing, the regeneration, and the restitution of all things, spoken of

Digitized by Google

by all the holy prophets, refer to the ages to come, beginning with the second advent of Christ, and the resurrection of his saints; for "the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." The saints are to be a kind of first fruits of His creatures; the regeneration, the restitution of all things waiteth for their complete redemption first; for the promise is to Abraham, In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Christ is pre-eminently Abraham's seed; but of the saints who are to be one with Christ, it is said, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." So the "thousand years' reign" is one of the ages of restitution, one of the times of refreshing during which the redeemed and glorified saints are to sit with Christ on His throne, and have dominion over the nations. (Rev. 2 : 26, 27; 3 : 21, etc.)

He remarks on Rom. 11 : 26, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, etc.," "That the Deliverer is to come out of Zion, shows clearly that the physical Zion cannot possibly be meant," and that "the Apostle could never have designed to give the Jews the high title of Zion, to the undervaluing of the Christian Church. He rather teaches that the true Zion exists in all ages, that it exists before the conversion of the Jews, and that salvation will come to the Jews, from the Saviour who is present in and with His Church." But there can be no intentional difference between Paul and Isaiah, though Isaiah says "to Zion" and Paul says out of Zion; for the Deliverer must come to Zion that he may be manifested out of Zion. The term "out of Zion," simply meaning the place of his glorious manifestation, as "out of thee," Bethlehem, meant the place of his incarnation. The Professor's exegesis simply contradicts the prophecy that "the Redeemer shall come to Zion." The Apostles' quotation of this passage in its connection shows that its fulfilment is yet future, and so also is Zech. 8: 2–8, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury. Thus saith the Lord, I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls, playing in the streets thereof. (See Isa. 65 : 17–25.) Thus saith the Lord of hosts, If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in my eyes? saith the Lord of hosts. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness." The Divine jealousy against Israel for their sins is spoken of in Deut. 32 : 21–43; Ps. 79; Ezek. 16 : 1–59; Zeph. 1 : 12–18, etc. And for Israel in Ezek. 16 : 60–63; Zeph. 3 : 8–20.

It would be difficult, we think, even to Prof. H. to interpret these predictions of the Christian Church, nor do we believe he would dare such a perversion of Scripture. And are all these predictions to be set aside because they are not reiterated in the New Testament? Or must they be subjected to the alchemy of an allegorical exegesis, the result of which is, the Professor himself being judge, "that in explaining the Scriptures, men are governed by inclination, and find in them that, and that only, which agrees with their wishes." It was not designed that the New Testament should reiterate the promises of God to Israel. The New Testament is designed for a dispensation coming between the "casting away" of Israel, and the "receiving of them" again. "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." The national Israelitish covenant, by which the kingdom was promised to them on condition of their obedience, is annulled on account of their disobedience; and during the Christian dispensation the kingdom is preached to all, both Jews and Gentiles, and is thereby made the object of faith, and all who believe become its heirs. And Israel, except

Digitized by Google

the elect remnant, remains in blindness, until by the Gospel God has taken a people out of the Gentiles for His name. Israel is not received again nationally until the end of the times of the Gentiles, and then not to their ancient national covenant, but according to the predictions of the prophets. Under these circumstances it is enough that Jesus tells us that not one jot or tittle of the Old Testament scriptures shall fail of fulfilment. Nevertheless, the conclusion arrived at by Prof. H., that the New Testament does not contain the slightest allusion to the supposed glory of the future kingdom of Israel, is the result of his following the allegorizing method of interpretation. Such allusions are not wanting, and are discovered to those who understand the Scriptures according to their grammatical import, and who compare Scripture with Scripture.

Taking the case which he cites for an example, we shall find the allusion there. In Matt. 23:39, he says we find "not a single word of the rebuilding of the house, but are merely told that they will see the Lord." The phraseology is: "Ye shall not see me henceforth until ye shall say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Now what is this but an allusion to His second coming in glory, as predicted by the Old Testament Scriptures, when He will raise up the tabernacle of David, etc.? (Amos 9:11.) For "when the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory." (Ps. 102:16.) And when he was adjured by the high priest to tell them whether he was the Christ, the Son of God, Jesus answered that it was as He said: "Nevertheless, I say unto you, hereafter shall you see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26:63, 64), in which there is allusion to the prophecy of Daniel, that at the termination of the Gentile powers the Ancient of days shall come and the saints shall possess the kingdom. And then the righteous branch of David shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice on the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely, etc. (Daniel 7:22, 27; Jer. 23:5, 6.) And in every reference to the coming of Christ in the gospels and epistles, there is a tacit allusion to His reign, and the future restoration of Israel in his days. But the restoration of Israel forms no part of the Christian dispensation, and refers not therefore to any such glory as that dreamed of by those who hold to the dogma of their conversion to the Christian faith, and leadership in the conversion of the world. No such future as that awaits Israel. The predictions concerning Israel's restoration can never be made to harmonize with that theory. Their restoration will be national, and to the headship of the nations, under the government or dominion of the saints of God. * *

JACOB'S VISION.

GEN. 28:10–15.

How strange it is that many, in attempting to throw light upon the dark portions of Scripture, and to unfold its mysteries, should lose sight of the promises made to, and the prophecies concerning Israel, whereas if the experiment were made, it would be found that the Jew is that magic key, potent to unlock most of the hidden treasures of God's word. Strange that we should forget that God has repeatedly declared Himself "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," and has said, "this is my name forever, and this is my memorial to all generations!" If these words were more deeply engraven on our hearts, light from the pages of Scripture would oftener beam into our minds, with clear and vivid brightness.

This vision has generally been interpreted to signify the mediatorial office of the Saviour, but it does not follow that because the Saviour's mediatorial office is taught in Scripture, it should be the subject of this vision. Does it seem correct to explain the ladder, and "the appearance of the Lord who stood above it," both to signify Christ? A mediator cannot mediate between himself and another party by himself. And that "the Lord who stood above," means the Lord Jesus, there is no dispute among commentators,—the idea, then, that the ladder applies to the same person, can hardly be sustained.

The ladder is evidently intended to point out a medium of communication between heaven

Digitized by Google

and earth—that idea need not be departed from—and the following passages of Scripture may indicate what is the substance of this "shadow of good things to come."

Paul, in Rom. 9 : 4, speaking of the Jewish nation, says: "To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises: whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came." In Isa. 2 : 3, we read: "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." In accordance with this, it was, that from Jerusalem, and by Jews, was first conveyed to the Gentile world the Gospel tidings; by Jews were the books of the Old and New Testaments written, and by Jews were they preserved; to Jews God revealed Himself, and through Jews has that revelation been imparted to the rest of mankind, and when the Angel of the covenant took upon Him the form of man, it was as the seed of Abraham He appeared upon earth. So far, we see heavenly blessings conveyed to the world through the Jewish nation as the medium or channel of communication.

Now turn to still unfulfilled prophecy, and what testimony does it bear on this subject? What does God say of that people, now scattered, and apparently forsaken and forgotten? See Isa. 60 : 1–5, etc.; 62 : 7; Jer. 3 : 17; Ezek. 34 : 26; Micah 4 : 1–7; Zech. 8 : 13–23; 14 : 8, 9. Many more passages might be referred to, but these are sufficient to show that the Jews will be restored to their own land, that their now-rejected Messiah will reign over them as their King, and that when that joyful period comes, they will be made blessings to the rest of the world. They will be a holy nation, all righteous, and will be the dispensers of the knowledge of God to the nations of the earth. In this blessed state of things we may behold the realization of Jacob's vision. Thus the appointed medium of communication between heaven and earth will still be the Jewish nation, receiving all blessings from Christ, their King, the Lord above it; enjoying the beams of His glory, and reflecting these upon the rest of the world.

And how appropriate that Jacob should, in his distress, have beheld in a vision the future glory of his people, and as their representative —their federal head—have received the promise: "I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land?" How much more grand the meaning of this promise, thus applied, than when restricted to Jacob?

The promise of the Saviour to the Apostles, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," is appropriated by the whole Church; so may this be by the whole Jewish nation: "I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

NOTE.—In corroboration of the above interpretation, an eminent expositor says, that the word "mountain" expresses better than the word "ladder," what is intended in the original. A mountain is the Bible symbol for kingdom. So translated, the vision connects itself immediately with Isa. 2 : 1–5, and Micah 4 : 1–7. These prophecies may then be considered as expository of Jacob's vision. E. T.

ALEH KEREACH.

"A GOOD man — no doubt, but — . . . . 'weak' in some points—given to visionary notions: his usefulness is impaired:—damages his position, and spoils his prospects." Q. E. D. "*Aleh, kereach!*"

"A weak-minded man; a fanatic—impractical and foolish! just as if the age of miracles was not past. He ought to know that Millerism and resurrection robes are played out." Q. E. D. "*Aleh, kereach!*"

"Crazy notions; crack-brained enthusiasts; shallow pates; religiously mad!" Q. E. D. "*Aleh, kereach!*" Positive, comparative, superlative.

There is one thing in which these three classes, though widely differing otherwise (for the first are good, the second doubtful, the third infidel), are agreed—that is, on the absurdity of a translation of living men and women from the midst of this bustling age. The idea! Preposterous! "*Aleh, kereach.*"

To those, however, who have a better knowledge, these words make ominous suggestions

Digitized by Google

of two she-bears that came out of the wood, symbolizing (possibly) the Antichrist and the false prophet. For, what is contained in this cabalistic-looking Hebrew phrase? Put into English, we recognize a familiar saying—none other than: "*Go up*, thou bald-head!" "*Kereach*," *i. e.*, bald on top; weak in the brain; soft on religious matters.

Now we may not resort to the *tu quoque*, and retort: "*Gibeach*," *i. e.*, bald in front; lacking in discernment; imbecile in discerning and sifting facts; weak in the perceptives. But we wish to point out, in the prevalence at this time of the spirit of scoffing that dictated the shouts that rose between Jericho and Bethel, an additional striking proof of the predicted state of the world just preceding the Lord's coming. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying: 'Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.'" (2 Pet. 3:3, 4.) "*Aleh, kereach!*"

A few comparisons suggest themselves. Should they be thought a little fanciful, we plead Kirwan's apology respecting Popery, to wit, that he had long since perceived that the thick hide of the beast is impervious to anything except to shafts tipped with a little ridicule. Amid so much to depress us, a little harmless cheerfulness will help to raise our spirits.

"*Aleh, kereach!*" Who shouted it? Little children. They caught it from the spirit of the age. Why even the good men of those days, the children of the prophets, received Elisha's honest testimony with incredulity, though just before, they professed to have had a *divine intimation* of it. But, now that this intimation had become a fact, they "urged him till he was ashamed." Then the idolaters caught up the cry: "There goes the 'ascension man!'" And then? Why then, as our German friends in their homely proverb say: "*Wie die alten sungen, so zwitscherten die jungen.*" The young birds chirped what the old ones sung.

"*Aleh, kereach!*" Well (they argued), and what if he *has* seen Elijah go—what if a rapture has really taken place? To talk of it (you see), is exceedingly ill judged and untimely. "Yes, indeed," responds another, "precisely so; very imprudent—not at all in harmony with public sentiment."

And as for Jezebel's highly cultivated and refined contemporaries, they could not but perceive at once how utterly opposed such a ridiculous statement was to their aesthetic tastes; in a word, to "the enlightened spirit of the age." Consequently, by a natural inference, this Elisha was legitimate game. It was less than he deserved to be made a butt for ridicule. And so the children, with peals of laughter on every side, shouted, as the ridiculous idea occurred again and again,—shouted: "*Aleh, kereach!*" And the sport would have lasted longer, but for an *intervention* from an unexpected quarter.

To send two raging she-bears, that tare forty and two of them limb from limb, to death, with blood, and groans, and tears, seems an extreme measure of retaliation. But that is just what God Almighty did. For some reason He seems to have been more than commonly displeased. Quite unexpectedly *He* took a hand in the matter. Let us not think that milder measures would have been better, lest we might be found in bad company. — Tom Paine.

Now who are these scoffers? Among them, alas, some few true but deluded disciples—little children in Christ, at best. And among the worldlings, what? Little children in knowledge of some of the simplest truths of the Bible, and living evidences of the truth of the statement made in that book, to the effect that: "Professing themselves to be wise they became fools." (Ros. 1:22.)

A friend makes a suggestion: Have you ever, beloved reader, tried to reckon up the sum of the divisions and subdivisions of "our Zion?" Possibly they might amount to just forty-two. "*Aleh, kereach! Aleh, kereach!*"

"The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun." (Ec. 1:9.)

Digitized by Google

But amid all this quiet pity or sarcastic din, could warning reach such ears, we would say to them: Pause, examine evidence dispassionately. Granting that some have been fanatics on the advent question, and that "some have ridden this hobby to death," might it not still contain most important truth? Is the sublime second coming of the Lord of life and glory, the only truth that has been injudiciously handled by friends, or travestied and ridiculed by foes? Then whence the bitterness and prejudice against this particular truth, and whence the reluctance honestly and patiently to examine it? Have not some of the greatest minds in the annals of human science, and some of the greatest benefactors of our race had to endure reproach, because of a misapprehension or an ignorance instantly recognized by the succeeding generation?

We affectionately entreat those, at least, who hold with us like precious faith and love in and for our Lord, not thoughtlessly to bear a part in a senseless hue and cry, raised by the "false accusers, incontinent, fierce, and despisers of those that are good," and unworthy of sober, Christian men. Why not, like the Virgin, keep all these things, and ponder them in the heart? What if there seemed to her to be palpable contradictions and unfathomable mysteries? She knew she had received a communication direct from God, and she held fast to it. Why not, like Anna and her friends, be looking for redemption? (Eph. 1:14; Eph. 4:30; Ros. 8:23; Luke 21:28.)

Let not our Jehoshaphats, who honor Micaiah, fellowship with Ahab in anything, lest, even if that should not come upon *them* which is *written*, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish! For I work a work in *your* days; a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you," they should be compelled, in turn, to *long* for that which they now smile at and reject, and have to hear and bear, in their turn, the derisive cry: "*Aleh, kereach!*"

E. E. R.

Selections.

FINAL SATISFACTION.

"I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness."

The glorification of believers is invested with profound mysteries which the testimony of God does not unveil, and unto which our sin-weakened minds could not attain. "We know not what we shall be." Let us, therefore, not give unrestrained license to our fancies, and follow the inordinate impulse of a prurient curiosity; but keep ourselves to the landmarks of revealed truth, and form our anticipations by the promises which we inherit. While there is much respecting our future being and destiny which we cannot now know, yet there is much which the grace of God has placed in our power to know, and altogether sufficient for the demands of this life. And we are as criminal in the neglect of what God has revealed, as in attempting to search beyond what He has been pleased to make known. It is the truth, and the whole truth of the inspired word which is profitable to our souls. And all baseless speculations and wild vagaries are pleasing only to a distempered mind, and are but hurtful fanaticism. If we believe in Christ, we have the divine assurance that God hath given to us the power to become His sons. We are even now His sons,—having the nature of such by regeneration; and with this nature the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father. And we have the title and right as children to an inheritance bestowed by our Father, sealed by our elder brother in the testament of His own blood; the earnest of which inheritance we already possess in the gracious power and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And while the glory pertaining to this sonship and adoption is adjourned and reserved for another world—while the details of our condition and blessed-

Digitized by Google

ness are yet of those secrets which belong unto the Lord our God, yet we have such a testimony given us that we may cheerfully walk by faith, and live by hope. We know that Christ is infinitely blessed and glorious, that His character is infinitely holy and beautiful, that His state, and dignity, and honor, are the highest in the house of the Father. And though we know nothing else, we should be content, while here, with the assurance that we shall be like Him.

EARTH NOT OUR HOME.

EARTH, with all thy grief and sorrow,
And thy changes of to-morrow;
With thy woe and with thy parting,
With thy tears of anguish starting,
With thy countless heart-strings breaking,
With thy loved and lost forsaking,
With thy famished millions sighing,
With thy scenes of dead and dying,
With thy graveyards without number,
Where the old and youthful slumber;
Earth, O Earth! thus dark and dreary,
Cold and sad, and worn and weary,
Thou art not my home!

Earth, O Earth! with all thy slaughter,
And thy streams of blood like water
O'er the fields of battle gushing;
Where the mighty armies rushing,
Reckless of all human feeling,
With the war-trump loudly pealing,
And the gallant banners flying,
Trample on the dead and dying;
Where the foe, the friend, the brother,
Bathed in blood sleep by each other;
Earth, O earth! thus dark and gory,
Blood and tears make up thy story,
Thou art not my home!

Earth, with all thy scenes of anguish,
Where the poor and starving languish,
To the proud oppressor bending,
And their cries for mercy blending;
Where the slave with bosom swelling,
Which despair has made its dwelling,
And the scalding tear-drops falling—
Sight to human hearts appalling—
Strives, but strives in vain to sever
Fetters that must bind him ever;
Earth, O Earth! with each possession
Sold to tyrants and oppression,
Thou art not my home!

Earth, O Earth! thy brightest treasures,
Like thy hopes and like thy pleasures,
Wintry winds are daily blighting;
Pain, and woe, and death uniting,
Youth and love and beauty crushing,
And the sweetest voices hushing;
Rich and poor, and old and blooming,
To one common mission dooming;
While the cries of every nation
Mingle with those of creation!
Earth, O Earth! thus dark and dreary,
Cold and sad, and worn and weary,
Thou art not my home!

Earth, O Earth! though dark and gory,
In thy pristine state of glory,
Angels came upon thee gazing,
Songs of love and rapture raising;
For thou then wast bright and beaming,
With the sunlight on thee streaming,
With the crystal waters laving
Shores with fadeless forests waving;
With thy plains and with thy mountains,
With thy ever-gushing fountains;—
Earth, O Earth! once fair and holy,
Fallen, fallen, and so lowly;
Thou art not my home!

Earth, O Earth! bowed down with sorrow
Cheer thee, for there comes a morrow;
Night and clouds, and gloom dispersing,
And thyself, O Earth, immersing,
In a flood of light undying;
When the curse upon thee lying,
With its thousand woes attending,
Death, and pain, and bosoms rending,
Partings that the heart-strings sever,
Will be banished, and forever—
Earth, O Earth! renewed in glory,
Love and joy make up thy story;
O be thou my home!

Earth, although thou seem'st forsaken,
Yet a note of praise awaken;
For the angels, lowly bending
Round the throne of light unending,
Gaze upon thee, sad and groaning,
Listen to thy bitter moaning;
Thou hast scenes to them amazing,
While on Calvary's mountain gazing;
And they smile on every nation
Purchased with so great salvation—
Earth, O Earth! renewed in glory,
Angels shall rehearse thy story;
O be thou my home!

Digitized by Google

Earth, the morn will *soon* break o'er thee,
And thy Saviour will restore thee;
Far more bright, and far more blooming,
And more glorious robes assuming,
Than when first, o'er Eden ringing,
Angel voices were heard singing;
For the King himself descending,
Heaven and Earth together blending,
With His saints, a countless number,
Those who live and those who slumber,
Over thee will reign victorious—
Earth, O Earth! thus bright and glorious,
Be thou then my home!

Editorial.

SPIRITUALISM.

MORE OF 1 TIMOTHY 4 : 1–3.

"NAY, but, Father Abraham, if one went unto them from the dead they will repent." So he thought—the rich man in Hades. (Luke 16.) If he thinks so still, surely he was incorrigible. But he did not care to learn when he had the opportunity.

How foolish it is to suppose that just because a man happens to be dead, he is endowed with superior wisdom and prescience! Yet this is generally thought to be the fact. But such is corrupt human nature, that there can be no doubt that if such a communication from the world of spirits could be clearly shown to exist, it would be welcomed, not only as supernatural, but as deeply important and valuable. Yea, and, when habit had made such communications familiar, even if it came *ab inferis;* provided only that it were divested of a repulsive exterior.

That the closing scenes of this dispensation will be marked by the most astonishing miracles, both Satanic and Divine, is certain.

What is a miracle? It is a (generally surprising) deviation from the ordinary course of nature. The necessities of the final contest between light and darkness, will call for extraordinary measures; and, hence, it would not be strange if, under these circumstances, miracles should reappear. But we are not left to mere conjecture, or to reasoning from analogy. We have a sure guide in the prophetic word. There we read that great signs and wonders will be performed by false Christs and false prophets; so astonishing, that, were it possible, even the chosen saints of God would be deceived and induced to listen to the teachings connected with them. Our Lord says: "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show *great* signs and wonders; insomuch that, were it possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before." (Matt. 24: 24, 25.) "The coming of the Lawless One" (so in the Greek—ἀνομος) "is after the energy of Satan; *with* ALL POWER, *and signs, and lying wonders, and all deceivableness* of unrighteousness in them that perish: because they received not the love of the *truth*, that they might be saved." (2 Thess. 2 : 9, 10.) "The two-horned beast doeth *great wonders*, and deceives the dwellers on the earth by the miracles which were given him to do. And it was given him to give breath to the image of the beast; that the image of the beast should both speak and cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be killed." (Rev. 13 : 13–15.*)

That divine miracles will also be performed, is abundantly evident. We quote the whole book of the Revelation in proof; if any one cannot see them there, his case cannot be reached by textual evidence.

The reason for this departure from the common course of nature, will be, in part, at least,

* It does not clearly appear in the Greek, which is the nominative to ποιησῃ—whether εἰκων, or θηριον understood; but it would appear that in the latter case the word would have been in the infinitive, ποιειν; as, just before, δοῦναι, following ἐδοθη. Hence, probably, it is the image itself (if this view is correct) which causes the death of the non-compliants. So the authorized version gives it; but Mr. Whiting's *very superior* version takes the other view.

Digitized by Google

that the conflict between Satan and God will have reached another crisis, another open issue; which crisis is founded on the known purposes of God, that cannot be hindered; for we cannot suppose that Satan, with his previous experience of omnipotence, would force an open battle, if he could avoid it. Nor will this contest, though presenting peculiar features, be unprecedented. He has measured his strength with the Lord, his Maker, before; though whether he then carried the struggle as far, we have, at present, no means of determining. As for submission, it appears it would either be impossible, or useless. or never to be rendered by his fallen nature; for which, so far as we can see from the Sacred Scriptures, no provision has been, or else can be made. To these, or similar causes, his opposition is traceable, his perverse necessities drive him; as for final victory, it is impossible that, after the first trial, he should ever expect it, and still more so after the closing scene on Calvary, submission is not in a fallen nature. Submission grows out of a *contrite* heart; and this, again, is the gift of God. Philosophy, piety, and tenderness combine in the lines:

"Give the sweet relenting grace;
Soften thou this heart of stone."

Thoughtful readers may obtain more insight by reading Mr. Purdon's "Last Vials," for 1868, which will stimulate further reflection. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

Now, with regard to these latter-day miracles, the same fact holds good as of the whole of the predicted apostasy, viz., the evolution will be gradual. Not until Antichrist sits at Jerusalem, in the temple, showing himself that he is God (2 Thess. 2:4), will these horrors and these miracles be fully developed. By that time mankind will have become accustomed to the supernatural; and, what is more, will, like Pharaoh of old, have become so *hardened* in sin, that the Divine judgments will pass unheeded. In proof of which, see Rev. 9, especially verses 20 and 21. A plague of five months, so tormenting, that men will seek death, and yet death will flee from them—what could be supposed to be more effectual, and what can be more horrible? But, as in the case of the Egyptian magicians of old, blood against blood, fire against fire, miracle against miracle, will leave their wicked minds hardened, and, perhaps, under the delusion of possible, or even probable, final victory.

Let all who wish to be prepared, mark well this point—the fact of this *gradual* development. For, as a *snare* (Jesus says it) shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. (Luke 21:35.)

The proof that the modern demonism, called "spiritualism," is the beginning of these Satanic wonders, multiplies and intensifies. If it is their beginning, then, no doubt, not (as Jesus once said, Luke 11:20) the kingdom of God is come upon us, but the kingdom of Antichrist and his energizer, Satan (2 Thess. 2:9), is nearing, indeed. Yet, we need be in nothing terrified, if we have the Spirit of Christ. His brief reign will be supplanted by the kingdom which the God of heaven shall set up on earth. Moreover, as our Lord tells us, those who watch and pray shall be accounted worthy to escape *all* these things, and shall be accounted worthy to *stand before the Son of Man.*

We extract, for the benefit and possible instruction of our readers, part of a letter of the London correspondent of the *New York Times*, published in the semi-weekly of February 26th, 1869. He is an able writer, probably not a Christian, but one who culls facts carefully and judiciously, and presents them effectively, no matter to what subject they refer, and in such a manner as to keep in view, and reflect the popular tone and taste; that is to say, he takes care not to be religious, yet he will not scoff openly. So far as we know, this man writes the best, the most interesting, and the most reliable letters sent by any European correspondent of the American papers; hence his statements have more interest and weight than those of a mere occasional or haphazard correspondent.

The following is the extract referred to:

"At this moment, next to the Ritualistic controversy, I am inclined to think that the most exciting topic in London society is Spiritualism. It has even been brought into the

Digitized by Google

new philosophical society, the Dialectical, which has several young lords among its members, if no elderly soap-boilers. Making a call in Paternoster Row, the other morning, I met a barrister of some literary and scientific, as well as legal reputation and social position, who gave me an account of some recent manifestations in the presence of *Mr. Home*,* which have been witnessed by a hundred or more noblemen, and literary and scientific notabilities, and which are more astounding than anything which has happened, perhaps, for centuries. Passing over the usual manifestations, such as the raising of heavy bodies, playing on locked-pianos, or so that the keys can be seen to move without fingers, I come to three or four distinct manifestations, the testimony to which is very difficult to get over. My informant is a man in every way reliable, and the other witnesses, whose names have been confidentially given me, not only belong to the highest circles of politics and society, but are men eminently capable of forming a correct judgment. These, then, are the facts related. In several instances the body of Mr. Home has been elongated, by measurement upon the wall and lying on the floor, to the extent of eight or nine inches, and then shortened as much—making a carefully measured difference of a foot and a half. He has been at different times raised into the air, from the height of four feet to that of a high ceiling, and carried round the room in the clear view of all present, who have had the means of assuring themselves that no deception was possible. He was carried horizontally out of a window in the third story of the house of a lord, and brought in at the window of another room some thirty feet distant, having been carried through the air forty feet or more from the ground. Finally, he has on several occasions taken a large live coal from a coal-fire, held it in his hand, and laid it in the hands of other persons, without even the smell of fire, or the sensation of heat being perceived by them. My informant showed me where his own finger had been burned in testing the reality of this manifestation. He assured me that he had seen Mr. Home go to a large coal fire, and lay his face upon the white-hot coals, without even singeing his hair or beard. As this is a pretty strong story, I beg to append the following, which I find in the *Spiritual Magazine* for this month. *Mr. Hall* is the well-known editor of the *Art Journal;* his wife, *Mrs. S. C. Hall*, is well-known as a writer, and has lately received a pension from the Queen.

"'No. 15 Ashley Place, Victoria Street, S. W.

"'SIR: I state facts, without explanation or comment. On the 27th of December I was sitting with nine other persons in my drawing-room. Mr. D. D. Home left the table, went to a bright fire, took thence a lump of living coal, brought it red to the table, and placed it on my head. Not a hair was singed, nor did I sustain any injury. The coal remained upon my head about a minute. Mr. Home then took it and placed it in Mrs. Hall's hand, without injury to her, and he afterward placed it in the hands of two of our guests. The gas-light and two candles were burning in the room. I add, that the nine other persons present would depose to these facts.

"'Your obedient servant, S. C. HALL.'

"The editor adds the following note: 'At the Conference at Lawson's Rooms, January 14th, Mr. H. D. Jenckin, who was present on this occasion, publicly stated the facts here given by Mr. Hall, and added several instances of the kind which he had witnessed. The fire-test, he said, had now been seen recently at different times, by more than fifty persons in the metropolis and its neighborhood.'

"I may add, that I know Mr. Jenckin, and that he is a gentleman of high scientific acquirements, as well as social position, and, I should say, every way to be trusted. *If there is any value in human testimony, in proof of any fact whatever, there can be no doubt of the verity and genuineness of the facts above stated;* and you may judge of the perplexity and consternation of men of science, Fellows of the Royal Society, and other fellows, who think it is their duty to understand everything, to explain what they do not understand, and to have a theory ready for every fact you can bring them. For a long time they scornfully, and then sturdily denied the facts; but when a man is confronted, in every company, by men of science as distinguished as himself, and worse still, by noble lords, who declare that they have seen and tested the very facts he denies, it becomes aggravating. Imagine Professor Tyndale declaring that the fire-test is an impossibility, an absurdity, a deception; calmly walks up Lord Adare, Lord Lytton, Lord Dunraven, or any one of a dozen equally satisfactory personages, and assures the company present that he had a live coal from the fire placed in his own hand, and held it for two minutes; that there was no mistake about it; it was seen by all his friends around him; that so and so burnt his finger trying to touch the

* The world-renowned Spiritualist, who is said to be on good terms with many of the crowned heads of Europe, and to have been frequently closeted with Louis Napoleon.

Digitized by Google

coal, and that it would have burnt through an inch board in the time he was holding it. What is a poor Fellow of the Royal Society, and Professor in the Royal Institution to do in such a case? He must either shut up like an oyster, or take Signor Damiani's bet, and in the true English fashion, back his opinion. However, we shall see what will be done in the Dialectical."

Now, we ask, what sort of demonstration do men want, that modern demonism is a reality; that "spiritualism" is the predicted demonism of 1 Tim. 4:1-3? Incipient, perhaps, as yet, but the same? Do they want it proved in the same manner as the problem concerning the square of the hypothenuse? After the innumerable demonstrations by facts bearing some resemblance in manner to those concerning which our Lord said: "Believe me; but if not, believe me on account of the works themselves" (Jno. 14:11, Greek)—that is, open to the observation and inspection of all,—it seems there are still those who come, saying: "Master, we would see a *sign* from thee." (Matt. 12:38.) As we remarked above, with increasing wonders will come increasing difficulties and increasing unbelief; so that there will always be room for hesitancy in taking a decided stand for or against. When the facts cannot be denied, men will still walk in their own light, and refuse to turn to the inspired oracles for information. As an instance, read the remarks which the editors of the *New York Times* appended to the above extract from the letter of their English correspondent. It was in the poignant grief which this perversity caused him, that the weeping prophet cried out, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord." (Jer. 22:29.) If the crisis is indeed close upon us, the warning given by the mouth of Isaiah of old is more than ever timely: "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." (Isaiah 50:11.) The following is the comment of the *New York Times* editor:

"It seems that the 'spirits' did not desert the *medium*, HOME, after the London jury decided against his attempts to extort money from a rich old lady who fell in love with him. His present 'spiritualist' operations (recited in our last London letter), are far more astounding than all his former doings. He can handle red-hot coals, and put them on other people's hands and heads without injury. He can pass horizontally out of a third-story window, and pass in again through a distant window, moving through the air forty feet above ground. More startling still, it is testified that his body has been elongated by measurement upon the wall, and lying on the floor, to the extent of eight or nine inches, and then shortened as much, making a carefully measured difference of a foot and a half. All these things have been certified to by great numbers of scientific experts, not to speak of noblemen and gentlemen of high degree. If Mr. Home be not the most ingenious and successful humbug of the nineteenth century,—then what?"

Then what? Our thoughtful, praying readers could give the required information. For if we are, indeed, in the very time of the end, we have a guide-post set up, just here, in the words of our Lord: "When these things *begin* to come to pass, lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke 21:28.) Then what? The removal of the church, beginning with the thief-taking of the eagles. Then what? The coming down to the earth of Satan, having great wrath, because he knoweth he hath but a short time. Then what? The stepping out on the stage of the fully-developed Man of Sin, in the person of the Wilful King.

While we were penning the above, the semi-weekly *New York Times* of March 9th, 1869, was brought to us. It contains an account of the great Powell will case at Newburg, New York, in which no less an amount than $2,000,000 was at stake. The will was contested, on the ground that the testatrix was a spiritualist, and had not acted of her free will. The details are very interesting, but we have no room for them, more especially as these disputed spiritualist will cases are now becoming so common. Demon working and demon teaching are compelling notice, and can no longer be sneered at. The counsel for the defence maintained that as intercourse with demons is recognized by the Bible as a reality, and has

Digitized by Google

been so recognized in all ages, the mere fact of the testatrix having been a devotee did not incapacitate her from knowing the value of property, and to whom she wished to leave it; which was the only point for the jury to decide. We must content ourselves with quoting a single sentence from the lawyer's speech; it proves that what we have heretofore printed about the wide prevalence of spiritualism, is not a crotchet of a few clergymen or students of prophecy, but is now so well known that no one thinks of contradicting it. "Mr. Fancher said: 'If a believer in Spiritualism is not competent to make a will, there are millions of men and women in the United States, and in other enlightened countries, of the highest intelligence, who would come under the prohibition.'"

Ghosts now sit for their portraits. Under the head of "A Wonderful Mystery," we find in the *Toronto Globe* (Canada), a copy of the account given by the *New York Sun*, of an investigation made by the reporter of that paper, at the gallery of Mr. W. W. Silver, 630 Broadway. The reporter says that he cannot explain the mystery, but that ghost portraits are really taken. Full details are given, for which we have no room. E. E. R.

THE WORLD IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men [nobles, lords, princes], and the captains of thousands, and the rich, and the mighty, and every slave, and every freedman, hid themselves in the caves, and the rocks of the mountains; and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: because the great day of His wrath is come, and who is able to stand!"—Rev. 6: 15–17.

We have here a glimpse of the constitution and general condition of society at the time the judgment comes upon the world. Some believe and teach, that free institutions are destined to become universal, and that monarchy is doomed to fall before the march of modern civilization. We here see that such hopes will not be realized. Kings are still on their thrones, and princes and orders of nobility remain till the judgment comes. Some are looking for a blessed time of peace and prosperity in this world, when all wars shall cease, all armies disband, all nations transmute their implements of destruction into instruments of husbandry, and the clash of arms be hushed forever. We here see that there will still be soldiers and military commanders pursuing their bloody profession up to the time of the end.

Some will have it that universal emancipation has but a few more battles to fight, and that human slavery is as good as at an end. We here see that the day of judgment still finds slaves in the world, as well as men who have but recently been freed, and all the present distinctions of class and fortune unchanged. Suppose that the sixth seal were to be opened to-day. What would it find? Kings and emperors on their thrones; princes, nobles, dukes, and lords, securely priding themselves in the prerogatives of their caste and station; standing armies, at rest and in action, and military commanders with swords upon their sides; rich people wallowing in wealth and luxury; men and women in high places and in low, working the wires that fashion events; slaves toiling at their tasks, and freedmen just out of their bondage; and evidences everywhere of a depraved and disordered state of things. This is what the judgment would find if it came to-day. And this, John tells us, is what it finds when it does come in reality. Let political reformers and theologians then say to the contrary what they please, human society as it is, and as it has been for these ages, with all its burdens, disorders, and inequalities, will continue the same, till Christ himself shall come to judge it for its sins.

There is one thing, however, which shall be very different in the day of judgment from what it is now. The self-security and composure with which godless people live, will then be driven to the winds. Though all the judgments under preceding seals may have failed to appal and arouse them, they will not be able to maintain their equanimity under what this shall bring forth.

Nor does it matter who, or what men may be, they will be alike overwhelmed with inexpressible dismay and horror. Kings, princes, nobles, men used to the shocks of battle, the rich, the great, the wise, the bond, the free, high and low, without exception, become the

Digitized by Google

victims of their fears, and tremble, and howl, and pray, and rush to the fields, to the cellars, to the caves of the rocks, to the clefts in the mountains, to every place where shelter and concealment is dreamed of amid the general desparation. So John foresaw the scene, and so it will be.

We notice, also, the correct interpretation which mankind will then put upon the terrific disturbances of nature around them. Storms, earthquakes, eclipses, and unusual phenomena in the heavens, are natural symbols of Divine wrath. The ancients regarded them as auguring and embodying the destroying power and wrath of Deity. They are always and everywhere precursors and prophecies of the forthcoming judgment of God. They are so presented in the Scriptures, and accordingly inwrought with all inspired diction. There is also an instinct to the same effect, which has ever lingered with the race, and which cannot be entirely suppressed. Modern science calls it superstition. Savans of earthly wisdom propose to explain everything on philosophic principles, and think to prove to us that neither God, nor His anger, nor His judgments, have aught to do with it. People also have become so enlightened nowadays as to be above alarm at strange commotions in the elements, or signs in the sky. They have learned better. These things may all be naturally accounted for. Why, a little care might give us tables of them for a thousand years to come, with the days, and hours, and minutes noted. Indeed, men have become so knowing about Nature and her laws, that they do not see much necessity any more for a God at all, much less for any judgment or interference of His in the affairs of the universe. This is the spirit of much that men call science. But when the vision of this text comes to be realized, woe to the materialistic, pantheistic and atheistic philosophies with which men suppose they have rid themselves of the superstitions of antiquity. One flash from the judgment throne will confound them utterly. When the sixth seal breaks, and the vibrations of it are upon the universe, turning sun and moon to darkness and blood, convulsing the firmament, shaking down the stars, and moving mountains and islands from their places, not the ignorant only, but the philosophic and the learned—kings and magnates of science and state, and all classes and kinds of men together, rush from their dwellings, strike for the caverns, cry out like terrified babes, confess to the presence of a Divine Power, whose existence their superior learning had put down as a fable, and with one accord now preach and proclaim the advent of a day which they had pronounced impossible! Why this consternation—this change in their way of regarding and treating these advent doctrines—this vociferation about the judgment—this trepidation and horror touching a day of wrath now? This is not the way they used to deal with this subject. There is a mighty shaking indeed; but earthquakes are all from natural causes! Rather remarkable eclipses truly; but such things are easily explicable on natural principles! An extraordinary star-shower; but these are innocent periodic things which belong to the natural ongoing of the universe! Unusual storms and atmospheric commotions; but they are the results of natural causes! Why, then, this dismay at the sublime activities of nature which a philosophic understanding should be able calmly to contemplate and really enjoy? Cowardly fools shall we call them, to break down in the conclusions of their superior intelligence amid such splendid opportunities for enjoyable scientific observation? Alas, alas, the old superstition is too strong for the modern wisdom. The horror-stricken world—kings, savans, heroes, with strained eyeballs and bloodless lips, fall prostrate and confess, that these beautiful activities of nature and her laws, are, after all, somehow linked in with the wrath and judgment of God and the Lamb!

Nor is it so much the physical prodigies, as what they argue, that renders the dismay so unsupportable. If there were nothing but the convulsions of the body of nature, terrific as they are, there would be a chance for some to endure them without becoming so thoroughly unmanned. But the chief consternation arises not simply from the outward facts, but from the unwelcome conclusions which they force

Digitized by Google

upon the soul. The physical manifestations may be in the line of physical laws, and in no way contrary to them; but whether miraculous or not, they are so terrific and Divine, that they compel the most atheistic to see in them the hands, and arms, and utterances of a Being, transcendently greater still, and to feel the demonstration in their souls, that He has verily risen up in the fierceness of just indignation against long neglect and defiance of His authority. It is not that nature has ceased to be herself, or that the principles of her activities have been repealed, that overwhelms them; but the resistless proof that all her awful potencies, now in such terrific motion, are God's direct powers, aroused and inflamed with His dreadful anger, and charged as heralds and executioners of His almighty wrath. It is not the shaking, the obscured sun, the bloody moon, the falling stars, the recoiling heavens, the moving mountains, so much as the moral truths they flash into the spirit; to wit, that God is on the throne, that sin is a reality, that judgment is come, and that every guilty one must now face an angry Creator. It is not nature's bewildering commotions; for they would willingly have the falling mountains cover them, if that would shelter them from what is much *more* in their view, and far more dreadful to them. What they speak of is, God upon the throne, the fear of His face, the day of reckoning, and the wrath of the Lamb.

And how pitiable and absurd the expedients to which they are driven! Many an opportunity for prayer had they neglected. Always had they contemned such humiliating employment. It did not suit their ideas of dignity or their theories. But now they pray, and have a grand concert of prayer, in which kings and mighty ones join with the meanest and lowest. They had often laughed and sneered at praying men; but now they all pray, some prostrate in the dust, some on their knees in dens and caves, some clinging to the trees, and all shrieking out in unison their terror-moved entreaties. O, imbecile people!

Still more absurd is the direction in which they address their prayers. Once they considered it folly that man should call on the living God; but now they pray to dead rocks! Once they thought it philosophic to deny that He who made the ear could hear prayers, or that He with whom is the Spirit and whose is the power could answer them; but now they supplicate the deaf and helpless mountains!

And yet weaker and more insane is the import of their prayers and efforts. Omniscience and Omnipresence are among the natural attributes of God. The very things before these people's eyes should have been enough to teach them this. And yet, philosophers as they are, their proposal is to conceal themselves from the Almighty, and so elude his wrath. Often had shelter and peaceful security been offered them in the mercies of the loving Saviour, and as often had they despised and rejected them; but now the silly souls would take the miserable rocks for Saviours. O the foolishness of men who think it folly to serve God! "He that fleeth of them shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered. Though they dig into hell," saith the Lord, "thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down." (Amos 9: 1–3.)

These kings and mighty ones of the earth had highly estimated the terrors of death, and tried to restrain and terrify men with fears of them. As shown in the preceding seal, they had been persecutors of the saints, and shed their blood to silence their testimony. Yet what they then thought so awful, they are now themselves willing and anxious to suffer, yea, and to go down into everlasting nothingness, as a happy alternative to what they find coming upon them. "They say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!" O miserable extremity to which guilt brings men at last! There are those whom these judgments shall not thus overwhelm. Hid in Jesus and his sheltering grace, they are secure against all such dismay. But "the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low." (Is. 2: 12).

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VII. JUNE AND JULY, 1869. Nos. 6 & 7.

Special Contributions.

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH.

(Continued from page 69.)

Prof. Hengstenberg further claims to have found in the New Testament, "a series of express testimonies against the idea of the 'future glory of the kingdom of Israel.'" And he first adduces the words of Jesus in answer to the woman of Samaria, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall, neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him," and says, "With this utterance of the Lord, the idea that Jerusalem shall once again in the future, acquire the position and importance of a centre, is irreconcilable." He is certainly right, in so far as the future may be limited to the hour or dispensation then about to be introduced. And the Professor hits upon this limitation when he says, "Christ's words put an end to the localization of the kingdom of God, for the whole period of the New Testament." But can the Professor be at a loss to perceive that after the termination of this period, which is the same as "the times of the Gentiles," the Lord Jesus, who ascended from Mount Olivet to the right hand of God, will so come in like manner as He ascended; and that then He will take the kingdom, and "the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end"? (Luke 1:32, 33.) "And at that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem." (Jer. 3:17.) Jerusalem will be the centre, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

He next adduces the words of Peter to believers, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people," 1 Pet. 2: 9, as at variance with the idea. And so far as relates to heirship of the kingdom of God, as its exalted and glorified kings and priests, these words designate believers of all ages as the nation to whom the kingdom taken from the natural seed of Abraham shall be given; for the saints shall take the kingdom and possess it forever. And when Christ comes to reign, they shall also appear with Him in glory, and reign with Him. But this instead of militating against the future restoration of Israel to their own land, will insure it; for there can be no restitution of all things but under the reign of Christ and His saints; when "the Branch of righteousness shall grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely." (Jer. 33:15, 16.) It is not the restored Jews who are to be kings and priests in that kingdom, but the saints of God who shall be glorified with Christ. And the restored Jews shall be the first of the nations under their government, and a blessing to all other nations: for "the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men." (Mic. 5:7.)

Digitized by Google

Again he says, "The words of the Lord in Matt. 21 : 43, 'Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and be given to a people (ἔθνει, nation), which bringeth its fruits,' afford little prospect of a new and glorious Israelitish kingdom." They afford none at all for a kingdom in the hands of restored Israel. They show that the kingdom or its administration is taken from the Israelitish nation, and shall be given to the saints of God whom Peter calls "the chosen people, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people," to whom it shall be given. But these words do not afford the slightest ground of objection to the restoration of Israel under the reign of Christ and His saints. On the contrary, they show that God is preparing a nation of sanctified ones to reign on the earth, and thus insure the fulfilment of all the good which He has promised to the house of Israel, in connection with the establishment of His everlasting kingdom in their hands.

He says again, "Decisive, further, against a future restoration of the physical Jerusalem, are all those passages of the New Testament, in which Zion and Jerusalem are employed, in the spiritual sense, to designate the Church. They plainly imply that the day of the physical Jerusalem is forever gone by." And we are referred to Gal. 4 : 26 and Heb. 12 : 22 as proof. But in Gal. 4 : 26, "the Jerusalem that now is," represents the Israelitish National Covenant instituted at Sinai; and the "Jerusalem which is above," represents the covenant of grace in Jesus Christ. Under the former, which was a covenant of works, the people were brought under bondage to the law, from which there was no deliverance but through faith in Christ, whereby they were brought into the covenant of grace, and made children of the "Jerusalem which is above;" or, as Isaac was, the children of promise, and heirs of the inheritance. The Israelitish National Covenant was abolished by the death of Christ, and the polity called "the Jerusalem that now is," was forever repudiated; and when the complement of the Gentiles shall be brought in by the Gospel dispensation, then the polity of the new covenant, Jerusalem from above, shall be manifested according to the visions of John, Rev. 21 and 22, when the New Jerusalem—the bride, the Lamb's wife, or the Church in its completeness—shall descend out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. The New Jerusalem is a symbol of the saints in their political organization as a hierarchy of kings and priests, to whom shall be given the kingdom taken from the Israelitish nation, or "Jerusalem that now is," that is, *was* when Paul wrote. And in reference to this, Paul says, Heb. 13 : 14, "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek ONE TO COME." The Israelitish National Covenant, formed at Sinai, could not take them beyond the Mount that might be touched, owing to their inability, on account of the weakness of the flesh, to keep the law, and so "the Jerusalem that now is" was left under the law, in bondage with her children. But the covenant of grace in Jesus Christ bring us, as an ultimate, to Mount Zion, which is to be the future seat of the heavenly Jerusalem, the city or polity of God, "when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." And this glorious state is to be reached through the successive steps which the Apostle traces back to the "blood of sprinkling," whereby we are redeemed from the curse of the law, pardoned, justified, and brought into the new covenant. (Heb. 12 : 18, 24.) It would not only be unnatural, but altogether absurd to force in a renewal of the old Israelitish polity between the present dispensation and the New Jerusalem polity; but this Millenarians do not, though they expect, according to the Scriptures, a restoration of Jewish nationality at the termination of the times of the Gentiles, and before the second stage of Christ's coming to establish His kingdom. Nor do we see any incongruity in their rebuilding the temple, and restoring their rites of worship, not by any reordination of God, but because He will permit them to do so in their continued unbelief, as He now permits them to flaunt their will-worship in His face. It will not, then, be by a Christian people in a Christian sanctuary that the sacrificial cultus of Judaism will be celebrated, but by restored Jews in a Jewish temple. And this

Digitized by Google

will take place while the saints will be in the air with Christ. And we expect that near the close of that period they will be invaded by Gog and all his bands; their land will be overrun from north to south; Jerusalem will be besieged and taken; and when they shall be in their deepest distress, they shall be delivered by the coming of Christ and His saints, as shown in Zech. 14:1, 5, after which they will be governed by the laws, and observe the institutions of the kingdom of Christ, of which they will be subjects.

The Professor next objects to the literal view of the passages which allude to the future glory of Zion and Jerusalem, on the ground of thereby "falling into extravagances which a sound exegetical tact feels to be foreign to the spirit of the Holy Scriptures," and gives for an example Is. 2, "where literally interpreted," he says, "Mount Zion is to be established on the top of the highest mountains of the earth." But the prophet says nothing about *Mount Zion*, nor about the *highest* mountains *of the earth*. In this representation, the Professor falsifies the record. It was Mount Moriah on which the Lord's house was built, and there is nothing extravagant in the idea that it will again in the future be the site of the Lord's house or temple. And the other mountains and hills referred to are the surrounding elevations, above whose tops the Lord's house on Mount Moriah will be conspicuously established. And there is nothing extravagant in this idea. Josephus tells us that when the Asmoneans reigned, they reduced the height of Acra, which before was higher than Moriah, that the temple might have the highest elevation.

Another example is Zech. 14:10, which he says, according to the literal view, requires "that all the mountains of Judea, except Jerusalem, are to be levelled to plains." Here, again, he falsifies the record, for the prophet says nothing about the "*mountains of Judea*," nor about their being "*levelled to plains*." The text is simply, that "all the land shall be turned as a plain, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem." And there is nothing extravagant in this idea, for the filling up of valleys and the reduction of hills would doubtless follow the extension of the city to the line here specified, until it would resemble a plain.

He next says that the literal mode of interpretation "involves us in contradictions;" and that Isa. 64:23 would be literally "impossible notwithstanding all our railways and steamboats;" and "that it is at variance with chap. 19:19; Zeph. 2:11; and Mal. 1:11." (1 Tim. 2:8.) The first text says, "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." But "all flesh" does not mean all persons. It means all races of mankind, and it is not impossible that during the period named, delegations from all will in that future age go up to worship the Lord at Jerusalem. See Zech. 14:16, 17. And this is by no means at variance with the other passages cited, which speak of the worship to be offered by the people in every place where they may dwell. The impossibility and contradiction is not in these passages, but in the Professor's imagination.

Again he objects to the literal view on the ground that it transfers "the fulfilment of most of the prophecies entirely into the future," and "ignores the past eighteen hundred years of the Church's history." But the literal view transfers no fulfilment of prophecy to the future which has already taken place in the past, and the unfulfilled prophecies must be transferred to the future if they are ever to be fulfilled. The literal view is opposed to the invention of fulfilments by "exegetical tact" on the mystical and allegorical theory, which are purely fanciful and extravagant absurdities. The Professor says, "The passages which speak of a return of Israel to Zion, in the age of the Messiah, cannot be literally interpreted, if for no other reason, because they represent Zion as the *absolute* seat of the kingdom of God." And adduces Jer. 3:16 to prove that Zion lost its central importance at the coming of Christ, when another centre was given to the kingdom of God; by which he means the Church. But he has altogether mistaken the sense of Jer. 3:16, which taken in its connection with v. 17, shows that it is the ark containing the testimony of their ancient national covenant,

Digitized by Google

which will be no more the object of their regard, at the time that "they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord." They still cling to that covenant, though scattered away from that centre; but when the Lord Jesus shall return and build again the tabernacle of David, and sit upon his throne, and Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, then they shall no more seek unto that ancient covenant; for the Lord will make a new covenant with them. But, then, Jerusalem, instead of having forever lost its central importance, will be the praise and joy of the whole earth as the city of the great King. And there is no difficulty in facing the consequences of this literal view, that in the future kingdom of God, the place of His throne will be the centre from which all His laws will proceed, and to which all honor and glory will revert.

The great difficulty in the minds of Prof. H. and others on this subject, is the blunder they make in regard to the Christian Church during the millennium. They foist on to the literal view their notion of the continuance of the Christian Church through the millennium; they call it the kingdom of God, and view all the prophecies through that ecclesiastical lens. Whereas, the elect Church, having been completed by the addition of the Gentile believers during the Gospel dispensation, will be glorified with Christ at His coming, and will be associated with Him as kings and priests in His kingdom, and the professing Church will be no more. The Gospel dispensation will end before the millennium begins, and with it will end the corrupt and apostate professing Church. All objections to the literal view based on a continuance of the Christian Church as now constituted during the millennium, are invalid. In the millennium there will be the kingdom, not the Church.

Another objection he makes to the literal view is, that though "it may lay claim to the excellence of believing more," yet "it is essentially a *Jewish* believing, to which the Christian Church has been opposed from its very commencement, and that it led to the crucifixion of the Saviour." This objection is based upon an erroneous view of the matter, or the confounding of things which are really separate and distinct. That those who were Jews inwardly, by the operation of the truth on their minds through the Spirit, believed in the literal fulfilment of the prophecies in regard to the age of the Messiah, is doubtless true, and, therefore, this may be termed *Jewish* believing; but that the Church was, from its very commencement, opposed to the literal view, is a gratuitous assumption and falsification of history. No fact is more clearly established than that the Millenarian doctrine, during the first three centuries of the Christian Church, was all but absolutely catholic, so that its opponents were not regarded as in all respects orthodox.

Again, the Jews who participated in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ did not so believe. They believed neither Moses nor the prophets, or they would have believed Christ. They made void the word of God by their traditions, imposing meanings on Scripture foreign to the literal sense, and, rejecting the counsel of God against themselves, they fulfilled the Scriptures in condemning Christ. Their blunder was of a similar kind with that of the Professor respecting the Church. They could see nothing beyond their national covenant, as the Professor can see nothing beyond the Christian Church. They could not look to the end of that which was to be abolished. The Jerusalem that then was, limited their vision, and so the Professor cannot look to the end of the Christian Church, it limits his vision. His errors nullify his objection.

The Professor next gives us an exposition of a few garbled quotations from some of the prophets, in which his "exegetical tact" arbitrarily transmutes the mountain of the Lord's house, and Zion, and Jerusalem, into the Christian Church, apparently without discovering that the same method would reduce the context to absurdity. He says, Mic. 4:1, "describes that streaming of the heathen into the Church, which began with the first appearance of Christ." But if here the mountain of the Lord's house means the Church, the other mountains and hills must mean churches, and the Church must be established on the top of the great ones and exalted over the small ones,

Digitized by Google

which is absurd. He then turns the mountains into symbols, and says: "The thought is, 'the kingdom of God will, in the future, be exalted above all the kingdoms of the world.'" But since, by the kingdom of God he means the Christian Church, by the kingdoms of the world, analogically, must be meant worldly churches, and so it means that the Christian Church in the future will be exalted over all worldly churches. In this, however, he reverses the order of the prophecy, for in it the establishment and exaltation of the mountain of the Lord's house precedes the flow of the peoples into it, and submission of the nations to it; but, in his fulfilment, he makes the "streaming of the heathen into the Church" precede its establishment and exaltation thousands of years. And here his "exegetical tact" fails to save his theory from what he calls the "dangerous result of transferring the fulfilment of most of the prophecies entirely to the future:" the only point fulfilled in this prophecy being the "streaming of the heathen into the Church" eighteen hundred years ago, and all the rest being transferred to the future for fulfilment, for, as yet, the nations have not beaten their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, and dropped the trade of war. But we cannot pursue these absurdities and inconsistencies of his "exegetical tact" any further. The above is a fair sample of all the rest.

In conclusion, this prophecy, Mic. 4:1, according to Isa. 2:1, is not concerning the Church, but "concerning Judah and Jerusalem." And the mountain of the Lord's house is in the future to be established and exalted as the place of His reign, and all people shall flow into it, and all nations learn His laws and walk in His ways. For He shall judge the nations, rule over them, and subdue them to peace, and war shall be abandoned. And the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

* *

COVENANT RELATIONS, BLESSINGS, AND PENALTIES.

As Christ, by His obedience and death, according to the covenant of grace alone, accomplished a justifying righteousness as our representative and surety, so Adam, by his one offence, lost his covenant standing, and righteousness, and involved the whole race in ruin. In the Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul establishes the representative character of the obedience of Christ, by contrasting it with the federal headship of Adam, through whose offence sin entered into the world, and death by sin, entailing death upon all men. (Rom. 5:12.) But Adam *alone* sinned representatively, for it was by the *single* offence of one "that death reigned," and judgment came upon all men to condemnation, and that, too, without further personal trial. The covenant constitution under which man was created, whatever may have been its character, was utterly broken, and the integrity of the Divine purpose in creation was impaired, and would have so remained eternally, but for the obedience of man's surety, in the person of the Word made flesh, as manifested in Christ Jesus our Lord. No second trial was possible. Nor is there, or has there ever been, any attempt to place man anew in a state of probation. The true, real issue is between Christ and Satan. Man is simply under condemnation, and his deep and most damning sin is, that "he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:18.) It is neglected salvation; it is despised mercy, that so inflames perdition.

By creature affiliation, man lost his original mediatorial constitution, and never again could he have appeared as mediator, manifesting the goodness, wisdom, power, perfection, and beneficence of God, unto the creatures that had been subjected to His authority and dominion. "How can one enter into a strong man's house and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man?" (Matt. 12:29.) "For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." (2 Pet. 2:19.) Man held the creatures now in his own behalf, and not for the honor of God, the Creator. He had forfeited the constitution of his creation, and had himself become the subject of all the dependency of mere creaturehood. Man having failed in Eden through the offence of one, death

Digitized by Google

reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, because no other sinned representatively, in covenant mediatorial relationship, but only as involved in Adam's forfeiture of covenant headship. "Until the law sin was in the world," and yet none of the immense multitudes who died between the expulsion from Paradise and the promulgation of the law from Sinai, could personally violate the prohibition to which the penalty of death had been originally annexed, it follows therefore that none could sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression. On the other hand, it is evident that none of his posterity could have a higher life-standing than Adam, who by his disobedience had incurred death, and in consequence of which, in all the dependency of creaturehood, was debarred all access to "the tree of life." But sin cannot be imputed where no law is, of which it is a transgression, still "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all who hold the truth in unrighteousness," "who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator." So they are without excuse. "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." The foundation failed in Adam, the constitution of the creation was disrupted, there was no medial agent through whom the invisible God could be known or manifested to the creatures, and thus the whole creation was without God in the world. Adam sinned representatively, and thereby lost covenant righteousness and covenant standing, and became subject to death, and thus death passed upon all in the same sense that Christ, by His obedience and death, as our surety, communicates His covenant righteousness to His people unto life eternal.

Whenever then that mediatorial constitution is restored, and made manifest in all its Divine efficiency and completeness, in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who, as man's surety, has taken his low estate, being made subject unto death, we shall then as necessarily have obtained a "victory over death," as the result of Adam's disobedience, and its abolishment, as the *inevitable* condition of creaturehood, as the removal of the curse from the irrational and material creation, as is clearly set forth in millennial times. It is also true, and will remain so eternally, that "the wages of sin is death," and the possibility of the one gives certainty to the other, but it will no longer be inflicted, as the direct consequence of the disobedience of Adam in Eden. If any sin against the restored constitution under Christ, for the sin they have committed shall they die. "There shall no more come thence an infant of few days, nor an old man that shall not have the full length of his days; for as a lad shall one die a hundred years old; and *as a sinner shall be accursed*, he who dieth at a hundred years old." (Isa. 65 : 20.) (Rabbi Leeser's translation.*) So also "when Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city (the millennial Jerusalem), and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." (Rev. 20 : 7–9.) But these die for their own sin, and not as the direct result of Adam's disobedience.

The Adamic constitution being restored and perfected in Christ as Mediator and Redeemer, the effects of his disobedience, with the curse annexed, must of necessity cease. Christ as Mediator will, in His times, as fully make manifest the wisdom, goodness, perfection, and beneficence of God, in the mediatorial constitution of the universe, as though Adam had never transgressed, and death had never reigned. We speak not now of the higher glories pertaining to resurrection life, but of man according to his original constitution in creation.

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is

* In *those days* they shall say no more, "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. *But every one shall die for his own iniquity;* every man that eateth *the sour grape*, his teeth shall be set on edge." (Jer. 31 : 29, 30.)

Digitized by Google

death;" but the death here spoken of is that which flows through the disobedience of Adam. Hence it will be observed, *all the references* to the abolishment of death, as a penal infliction for loss of covenant righteousness, *are connected with events that precede* the full-orbed glory of the millennial kingdom. "In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away the tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said *in that day*, Lo, this is our God: we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." (Isa. 25: 6, 8, 9.) This whole passage manifestly refers to the ingathering of the Jews, and their conversion to Christ as their Messiah, as introducing the millennial dispensation. So also in the recovery of Ephraim, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave: I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plague; O grave, I will be thy destruction." (Hos. 13: 14.) This is said to be consummated by the events recorded in 1 Cor. 15, which will be considered presently. Our Lord says of His Church, "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it," Matt. 16: 18; which is not only true of the entire body of the redeemed in resurrection life and glory, but also of the nations in the flesh, over whom Christ and His risen saints rule mediatorially. So St. Paul reasons, when the body of Christ shall be completed in resurrection glory and eternal life. "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor. 15: 54.) But this is at the time when Israel shall say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and when the Lord God shall wipe away tears from all faces," which is at the beginning of the millennium. During the millennium, the devil, that had the power of death, is fast bound in the abyss, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled.

If these things be so, we are now prepared to consider 1 Cor. 15, which is but a detailed account of the time, order, and manner of the resurrection unto eternal life, or as elsewhere called, the first resurrection, nor does it extend beyond the completion of the Church, as the body of Christ, in resurrection life. "For, since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so *in Christ* shall all be made alive. But every man in his own *order*. Christ, the first fruits," together with the "many bodies of the saints which slept, that arose, and came out of their graves, after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." (Matt. 27: 52, 53.) "Afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming." And not only so, for, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised *incorruptible*, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Both the *resurrection* and the *change*, here spoken of, is to honor, glory, and eternal life, not one word of "shame and everlasting contempt." "The dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4: 17.) *So far*, then, the Church is complete. That this is the teaching of this whole chapter, is ably and learnedly argued by the Rev. J. F. Berg, D.D. (a most virulent opposer of the Millenarian doctrine), in his controversy with Rev. Dr. Gordon, *Christian Intelligencer*, February 27th, 1868. On the passage, "As in Adam

Digitized by Google

all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," he says, "The phrase (*en Christo*), in Christ, is a *technical* term in Paul's writings, and *always* denotes the state of a believer." "I am justified in saying that Paul, in the course of his Epistles, uses these expressions not less than one hundred and twenty-three times; and in not a *single* passage, in which *en Christo* is used by him, does it mean anything but that which Paul indicates, when he says: 'If any man be *in Christ*, he is a new creature.' This is the *key-text* which opens the meaning in every instance." "In this chapter Paul is speaking of the resurrection of believers. Not a word is said of the resurrection of the unjust, in the entire context, except as that is included in (*to telos*) the end.(?) If he has been speaking of the general resurrection in that which precedes, and in *that which follows*, then all the dead will be raised to the resurrection of life; but he sufficiently explains his meaning, if it is not plain enough already, by adding: The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such, also, are they that are earthy; and, as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, *we* shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Why? "Because *we are no longer in Adam*, as our covenant head, but in Christ." "Christ shall, no doubt, raise the unholy dead, as their Judge, but not because they are *in* Him." They are not members of His mystical body. They have no part or lot in the *resurrection of which He is the first fruits, and of this Paul is speaking.*"

"The word *tagma* means primarily *order*." "We prefer the primary meaning, for the sufficient reason, that if we make *tagma* mean a band or cohort, we must *change the figure* which the inspired apostle uses, and substitute one which has no such authority." This we also accept.

"*Eita to telos.*" Then the end; not "next the last band." "We greatly prefer the 'supply' furnished in our version." And what is that, but the completion of the *order* of the resurrection of those who are (*en Christo*) in Christ? This, our version supplies. And of this, and no other, "*Paul is speaking.*" But this "supply" by no means suits Dr. Berg. He says: "The words in this passage denote, beyond all doubt, the end of the dispensation of grace; hence, the end of the world, which closes with the resurrection of the wicked, the burning of the world, and the scenes and awards of the last judgment, and of which Paul has *not* been speaking." We do not like to disagree with an old friend, but, if "our version" furnishes *this* "supply," we cannot see it. The resurrection *here*, the subject of revelation, as Dr. Berg has *most incontrovertibly proved*, is restricted to those (*en Christo*) in Christ. Now, by what law of hermeneutics is it to be so abruptly extended as to include "the resurrection of the wicked," and the burning of the world, and the scenes and awards of the last judgment? It looks very much as though there had been "a change in the figure." We have followed the *order* of the resurrection of those who are (*en Christo*) in Christ, down to the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds, whither the resurrected and changed saints are taken; but it is by no manner of means apparent that "the end of the dispensation of grace" has come. The angel having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people (which is not at all the Gospel of the present dispensation), saying, with a loud voice: "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for *the hour of His judgment* is come; and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. 14:7, 8), has not, as yet, even entered upon his mission. The man of sin, the beast and his image, has not, as yet, been developed or imposed his mark, nor have "the two witnesses" been slain. Who, then, are *to telos?* The last in order, "of which Paul is speaking"—the consummation of the resurrection of those in Christ? "Our version furnishes the 'supply.' I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their fore-

Digitized by Google

heads or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the millennium was finished. This is the first resurrection." (Rev. 20:4, 5.) This is the consummation, the completion, the end, *to telos*, of the first resurrection, according to the *tagma* or order, as indicated by St. Paul, without "change of the figure." It was manifested, *in time*, by Christ before leaving the world, and shall be completed when He shall again return to reign.

But the kingdom, thus constituted and established, is not for the peculiar and distinctive glory of Christ alone, in His own person, but according to the original constitution of creation, for the manifestation of the power, wisdom, goodness, and beneficence of the Godhead in covenant constitution, and thus redeemed and disenthralled from the curse, it is so subordinated to God, even the Father, that Christ, with His risen and glorified saints, occupy the true mediatorial constitution, according to the purpose of God in creation, which God, even the Father, in divine complacency, pronounced "*very good*." All the more ancient MSS., including the Vatican, have *paradido*, not *parado*, delivereth, implying a continuance of action, a continuous handing over of the glory of the kingdom for the honor of the Father. This seems to convey the true idea of the text, and harmonizes with other scriptures, for the throne of David is established from henceforth unto eternity, Is. 9:6, and is ever the throne of Christ. So, when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

C. S. B.

GATHER THEM HOME.

Gather them home, from the paths of sin,
Gather the rich, gather the poor;
Point to the gate where they enter in—
The road is narrow, but it is sure.
"I am the Way."

Gather them home, from the dens of vice,
Gather the young, gather the old;
Tell them of love without money or price,
Tell them of glories they may behold.
"I am the Truth."

Gather them home, from the haunts of shame,
Gather the mother, gather her brood;
Gather them where they will hear My name,
Win them away from the death of good.
"I am the Life."

Gather them home, from their cellars low,
There's room in my Father's house, I ween;
Gather them where no rough winds blow,
Gather the sheep to My pastures green.
"I am the Door."

Gather them home, every guilty soul,
Gather the crime-stained, they also are bought;
Gather the fool from his reeking bowl,
For an early grave is the drunkard's lot.
"I am the Vine."

Gather them home, from the midnight play,
Gather the weak, gather the strong;
Gather the sinner from his way,
His road is broad, but it is wrong.
"I am the Word."

Gather them home, I will hear their cries;
Gather the Gentile, gather the Jew;
Broken hearts be the sacrifice,
I bore their sins and paid what is due.
"I am the Lamb."

Gather them home, the idle crowd,
Gather the beggar, gather the knave;
Gather the low, the mean, the proud,
For such as these My blood I gave.
"I am the Christ."

Gather them home, from the streets at dark,
Gather them all, they may be won,
Gather them in My Father's ark;
Bid them look on the face of the sun.
"I am the Light of the world."

Gather them home, before they die,
Gather the merchant, gather the clerk;
Time and riches do quickly fly,
But there is peace in My Father's work.
"I and My Father are One."

Digitized by Google

Gather them home, on My holy day,
Gather them home from worldly care,—
Home to learn, to watch, and to pray,
Home to My temple, God is there.
"I am the Corner-Stone."

Gather them home, the halt, the lame,
Gather the maimed, the sick, the blind;
I have a cure, for this I came,
A healing power that all may find.
"I am the Physician."

Gather them home, who starve for food—
Home to My barn, I'll give them more;
Gather them home, My word is good,
Gather the hungry to My door.
"I am the Bread of Heaven."

Gather them home, who thirst for drink—
Home to my fount, the gift is free;
Gather them from destruction's brink,
Gather the thirsty souls to me.
"I am the Water of Life."

Gather them home, the lake is wide,
Away from the pit, the lost are there,
And Satan's power must be defied
By trust in God and contrite prayer.
"I am the King and Lord."

Gather them home, My servants true,
Gather them close to My heart of grace,
Gather My precious chosen few,
Gather them where they see My face.
"I am the Son of Man."

Gather them home, 'tis My right hand
That plays in every tidal wave;
My voice now shakes the sea and land,
And warns that none other can save.
"Behold, I come."

Gather them home, the day is near,
The wheels of My chariot swiftly run,
The wails of My children reach Me here,
Their night's departing, their day 'most won.
"Watch and pray."

Gather them home, gather them soon;
Though the "man of sin" must have his day,
I will gather My wheat before 'tis noon—
Gather it safe from the storm away.
"I am the Judge."

Gather them home, ere the war-cloud burst,
And break o'er the heads of the sleeping world,
Gather them home, I would hide some first,
Ere the flag of My vengeance is unfurled.
"I am their Hope."

Gather her home, My Wife, My Bride,
Gather My watching Church to Me.
I know that she waits, for I'm her pride,
Her joy, and her crown through eternity.
"I come! Amen."

JEDA.

Selections.

MATTHEW XXIV.*

GIVE me your earnest and candid attention, and I trust that, by God's help, we may get such a view of the leading principles which run through this chapter, and of its general outlines and bearings, as will enable us to read it intelligently, and derive instruction and edification from it.

"Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

Now, you will observe there are *three* distinct questions here proposed. When shall these things be? *i. e.*, when shall the destruction of Jerusalem take place? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? These questions, indeed, in the differences which mark them, were not distinctly apprehended by the disciples. They evidently confused them together, and considered them

* We make this extract from an admirable and timely publication of the *American Sunday-School Union*, entitled "A VOICE FROM OLIVET," by our friend and co-laborer, RICHARD NEWTON, D.D. We recommend our readers to get the entire Discourse, and to circulate it freely. All will be pleased with its clearness and spirit.

Digitized by Google

as referring to one and the same event. And they did this because they had no idea that their city or temple could ever be destroyed while the world stood. And when they heard their Master speak of the total destruction of their hallowed and gorgeous temple, they immediately but erroneously concluded that *that* period must be the time of His coming, and of the end of the world. In reply to their inquiries, our Saviour undertook, first, to correct their mistake in confounding these events together, and then to give a distinct answer to each of their inquiries. The correction of their mistake, and the definite answering of their questions, runs through the whole of this 24th chapter. This brings us down to the time of Christ's second coming. The 25th chapter is occupied with impressive parabolic representations of the solemn and stupendous scenes that must be enacted when that dread event takes place.

In looking carefully at the chapter before us, you will notice that the first three verses are merely introductory; while from the 36th verse to the end of the chapter is an application of what has been said. The main instruction of the chapter, therefore,—all that relates to the answers given to the questions of the disciples,—is found between the 4th and the 35th verses. And this part of the chapter consists of three divisions, each of which may be regarded as answering one of the three questions proposed by the disciples.

The first of these divisions runs on from the 4th to the 14th verses. It reads thus:

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

Here Jesus is correcting the confusion into which the disciples had fallen, in supposing that the destruction of their city and temple, His second coming, and the end of the world, were all to transpire together. And in doing this, he gives a general history both of the world and of the church,—a history including things which could not possibly transpire, in the few years which were to pass, before some of the very disciples to whom he was then speaking would see Jerusalem in ruins. This epitome of the world's history you find from the 6th to the 9th verses. In the course of this history, there were to be wars between different countries, nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. Harvests were to fail, producing famines; dreadful pestilences were to follow, with great tribulations. Terrible earthquakes were to take place in different parts of the world. Alarming sights were to be observed in the heavens: and all these, occurring from generation to generation, would be but the beginnings of fearful distresses, which should increase more and more, until this present state of things in the world should cease in the introduction of another.

It is supposed by some that our Lord meant to say that these things were to happen *before* the destruction of Jerusalem. But it is important to observe—what is an indisputable fact—that during the forty years which followed the delivery of this prophecy, until that contest between the Jews and the Romans, in the course of which Jerusalem was destroyed, no war of any kind took place which could be regarded as nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. The Romans then ruled almost the entire world, and a general peace was prevailing; so that the wars and commotions here spoken of must have reference to what has since occurred in the progress of the world's development.

To this epitome of the *world's* history follows a similar epitome of the history of the *church*. It extends from verse 9th to 13th. It tells of the persecutions and trials that Christ's people should endure; the false teachers and prophets that should arise, and the iniquity that should

Digitized by Google

abound, causing the love of many to wax cold. But it closes with the Saviour's own assurance that through all these trying scenes, those who endured to the end should be saved.

And then, having given these warnings and encouragements,—having told them that they were *not* to expect His coming and the end of the world in their own day,—He gave them, in verse 14th, one broad, distinct, particular sign, by the observance of which His people would know when they *might* expect that coming. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and *then shall the end come.*" This had a partial fulfilment before the end of the Jewish dispensation came, in the overthrow of Jerusalem; for Paul tells us that "the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven." It is to have a fuller accomplishment, in the world as it now exists, before the end of the present dispensation. Observe, Jesus says not a word here about the gospel being preached for the *conversion* of the nations, before He comes again. If such had been His purpose, *here* was the place to state it. But there is no mention of it. Here is a chart of prophecy reaching down to Christ's coming again; but it says nothing of the world's conversion before that coming. It only tells of the gospel preached for a witness, and then of the end coming.

This, then, is the first division of the chapter. Here Jesus corrects the error of His disciples in confounding His coming with the destruction of Jerusalem. He shows them, from what was to take place in the history of the world and the church, that a lengthened period must intervene between Jerusalem's overthrow and the time of His coming again.

We come now to the second division of this chapter. This extends from verse 15th to the 22d, both inclusive. It reads thus:

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand), then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: let him which is on the house-top not come down to take anything out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day: for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

Here we have our Saviour's answer to the second question of the disciples, "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" They were thinking of the destruction of their city and temple. They made a mistake in speaking of that event as the coming of Christ, and confounding the two together. Jesus does not stop to correct their *language*. But having already corrected their *thoughts*, He here proceeds to give them the signs by which they might know when the time for their temple's overthrow had come. Bear in mind, then, that this second division of the chapter has particular reference to the destruction of Jerusalem. And the signs which Jesus gave them were plain, palpable facts, evident to their senses, and about which they could not be mistaken. It was, as Luke gives it, "*When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh;*" chap. 21: 20. As given here, verses 15th and 16th, it is: "*When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, . . . stand in the holy place, . . . flee into the mountains.*"

"An abomination," in scripture language, denotes an idol or image. An abomination that maketh desolate is an idol or image connected with war, because war desolates. The reference here is unquestionably to the standards of the Roman armies. These were images of eagles, which were worshipped as idols by the soldiers. When the people of Christ should see these images or standards planted on the consecrated ground of the holy city, where no idol should ever be admitted, they were to take *this* as the sign which their Master had given them, and were at once to escape to the mountains. Those who might be in Jerusalem at that time must leave it. Those in the neighboring villages must by no means return into the city; those who might be taking their usual walks, on the flat roofs of their dwellings, must not even delay their escape by going down into the interior of their houses, but, descending at

Digitized by Google

once by the outside staircase, must flee for their lives; while those at work in the fields were not to go back even for their necessary clothing, but betake themselves to instant flight. These were the directions given. Now, observe how strikingly the facts of history answered to the particulars of this prediction.

When the Jews were at war with the Romans, and before they had made any sufficient preparation for the defence of the city, a Roman general, whose name was Cestius Gallus, came against the city with a large army. On the 4th of October, in the year 66, A.D., he encamped his soldiers within a mile of Jerusalem. Three days after, he took possession of a great part of the city, called Bezetha, and stationed his eagles opposite the most holy part of the place. Five days after, he made an attack on the temple itself, and placed his warlike instruments against its very walls. Had he persevered in his undertaking at that time, he might have taken the city with the greatest ease. But, without any apparent reason, on the night after his attack on the temple, he broke up his camp, and withdrew his army entirely from the city.

Immediately on his retreat, the Christians lost no time in making their escape from Jerusalem. They had seen "the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not;" and they hastened to obey their Lord's command, and flee to the mountains. And they had but a moment in which to make their escape; for the infatuated Jews, on their return from pursuing the retreating Roman army, closed the gates of their city, and allowed no one, on any account, to leave it. So that if the Christians had lost that opportunity to escape, they would have had no other, but must have perished with the other inhabitants of that doomed city. The extraordinary conduct of the Roman general on this occasion can only be accounted for by the secret providential influence over him of that omnipotent Saviour who had given His people these signs, and then secured for them this unexpected opportunity of profiting thereby.

And thus we see what the second division of this chapter is, viz., from the 15th to the 22d verses; and to what it relates, viz., the signs of Jerusalem's overthrow.

The third division of the chapter extends from the 23d *to the* 35th *verses, both inclusive, and relates to the signs of Christ's second coming.*

Jesus has done now with the subject of the destruction of Jerusalem. We have seen the striking clearness which marked the sign He gave them, by which to know the coming of that event. But Jerusalem's overthrow was a trifling thing compared with the solemn and stupendous event of His coming again into our world. The former was *local* in its character; the latter will be *universal.* The former affected but *one* nation; the latter will affect *all* the nations of the earth, with the whole company of Christ's ransomed people, both living and dead. And if our Lord instructed His people so *clearly*, concerning the sign which indicated the approach of the *lesser* event, can we suppose that He would leave them in the dark concerning that which was to herald the approach of the greater? Thus, upon the very face of the subject, and from the clear and satisfactory manner in which Jesus answered the previous question of His disciples, we have reason, at the very outset, to expect an answer to this, now before us, equally clear and satisfactory. And just such an answer we have.

From the 23d to the 28th verses of this division of our subject, Jesus gives His people general warnings. Impostors were to appear from time to time, calling themselves Christ, and performing wonderful works, calculated to deceive even His own people. He warns us against these delusions, and bids us give no heed to any who should declare that Christ had come. He assures us that when His comin takes place, we shall need no testimony from others respecting it. It will bear its own testimony—a testimony which will admit of no mistake. When the sun arises, we need none to tell us of the fact: his own beaming radiance proclaims it. And when the Son of Man comes, like the lightning, that darts its sudden flash in brightness through the sky, we are assured that "every eye shall see Him," and none will

Digitized by Google

be in doubt as to the certainty of His coming. It will not be necessary for any to inquire where He is; for in whatever part of the heavens He may appear, thither will all His true people at once be drawn to Him. The dead rising from their graves at the archangel's trumpet, and the corruptible bodies of His living people, changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the same startling summons, will be caught up to meet Him in the air. "For," says our Lord, "wheresoever the carcass is, thither will the eagles be gathered together." This is a proverbial expression, referring to the instinct by which the eagle scents its prey, and assuring us that when Jesus comes, by an equally mysterious, but infallible and resistless instinct, will all His chosen people be drawn to Him.

And now we come to the 29th and 30th verses of our chapter. These verses, in their relation to the important event of Christ's second coming, and as containing the clue to the great practical sign by which Jesus would have us know when His coming draws nigh, are, without comparison, the most important verses in the Bible. Thus they read:

"*Immediately after the tribulation of those days* shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven."

If you take this language literally, it refers to physical commotions in the natural world. If you take it in a figurative sense, then it refers to political disturbances among the nations of the earth, which are to precede the coming of Christ. It may be taken in either, or in both senses. The two most important points to settle, in interpreting this verse, are: What is meant by "the tribulation" here spoken of? and when is this tribulation to end?

Some persons, supposing that "the tribulation" of which our Saviour here speaks refers only to the horrors which attended and followed the destruction of Jerusalem, have looked for the fulfilment of the signs here mentioned in the calamities which then came upon the Jewish people.

That was undoubtedly the *beginning* of this tribulation, but not the *end* of it. How long that tribulation was to continue, we learn from the parallel passage in St. Luke 21:24, where we read: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and *Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*" But the tribulation which began with Jerusalem's overthrow has run on, with the downtreading of that city and country by Gentile power, and will continue while Gentile power has sway there. Whenever Palestine, with its glorious capitol, shall pass from under Gentile rule, and come in possession of the Jews again, then the event of which Jesus here speaks will have taken place. Then this long tribulation will have come to an end, and "*immediately after* this tribulation," the signs here spoken of will take place in rapid development.

Our Saviour then adds the parable of the fig-tree, in the 32d and 33d verses, in order to show that as the swelling buds of the trees are an infallible harbinger of the approach of summer, so His people, when they see these things *begin* to come to pass, may know that His kingdom is nigh at hand.

And then, in verse 34th, he adds: "Verily I say unto you, *this generation* shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." A misapprehension in regard to this verse has done more to throw confusion over all attempts to interpret this chapter than anything else. For if you take it, as many do, to mean the generation living at the time when Jesus was speaking, you are obliged to explain the whole chapter as referring to the destruction of Jerusalem. Then there is nothing in it that bears on Christ's second coming; and this grand and sublime prophecy, whose stupendous developments have been solemnly unfolding through more than eighteen centuries, has all to be compressed within the narrow limits of about forty years. This carries absurdity on the face of it.

To avoid this difficulty, some would substitute the word *nation* for generation in this verse. This would make our Saviour declare that the Jews, as a distinct race or nation, should not cease to exist till the events here

Digitized by Google

spoken of had taken place. The Greek word here used, γενεα, would undoubtedly bear this construction, and the statement so made would be *a* truth, but I think not *the* truth intended to be taught here. For, if the Jewish nation, after being miraculously preserved until this period, were then to cease its existence as a distinct people, there would be great force in such a statement; but if they are *never* to pass away as a distinct nation,—a peculiar people,—if through the millennial age, and the everlasting age beyond it, as Isaiah says, "their seed and their name" are to "remain," and they are to continue "an *eternal* excellency, a joy of *many generations*," *then* there would be, to say the least of it, a feebleness about such a statement hardly in keeping with the character of the speaker, and the grandeur of the themes he is handling.

The only thoroughly satisfactory rendering of this verse I have yet seen, is one which I first met with, more than twenty years ago, in a little book written by an eminent English clergyman, the Rev. Alexander Dallas. It gave me intense delight then, because it did so much to remove the difficulty I had always before felt in attempting to interpret this chapter. And that feeling continues still. This writer states that the Greek word αὕτη, the demonstrative pronoun, in our version translated "*this*," may, with equal propriety, be rendered *that*, or *the same*, and gives examples of places in which it is so rendered in the New Testament. Thus, in Luke 17:34, we read: "I tell you, in *that* night," etc., where in the original we have the very word which is here rendered "*this*." And in Matt. 3:4, when describing the way in which John the Baptist began his mission, it says: "*The same* John had his raiment of camel's hair," etc. Here again the demonstrative pronoun rendered "*this* generation," in the passage before us, is translated "the *same* John" in the other passage. Now just make this simple alteration in the rendering of this 34th verse; put "*that* generation," or "*the same* generation," instead of "*this* generation;" and consider our Saviour as speaking, not of the generation that *was* living when He delivered this prophecy, but of the generation that *shall be* living when the great sign of which He is speaking shall take place, and it is all plain enough. And thus, the solemn truth here taught is, that when Jerusalem shall cease to be trodden down of the Gentiles, and Israel's great tribulation be brought to a close, the stupendous events here spoken of, with the return of Christ from heaven, the raising of His dead people from their graves, the change and translation of those living, with the overthrow of His enemies, and the setting up of His kingdom in the earth, *will all transpire within the ordinary limits assigned to human life.* The *same* generation which witnesses the *first* act in this drama—so rapidly will the successive scenes follow each other—will witness the *closing* act also.

Such, then, is the teaching of this solemn and instructive chapter.

SPIRITUALISTIC PRETENSIONS.

SPIRITUALISM proposes to supplant and uproot Christianity, and substitute in its place the worship of demons. Among other questions put to the spirits at the *Banner of Light* office, in Boston, and their answer, as published in the *Banner* for April 10th, 1869, is the following:

"*Ques.* Is Spiritualism, as a religion, to supplant Christianity?

"*Ans.* Spiritualism, as a religion, I believe is to supplant Christianity. The era of the Christian religion is passing away, changing. It will lose nothing of its life, nothing of that which the world of mind has need of, but it will part with its dross and become absorbed in the newer and more perfect."

The spirits, through their mediums, are making a most persistent effort to destroy the influence of the Bible and the Christian religion.

We are aware that some think we magnify the present and coming influence of Spiritualism; but we are sure, if they knew all we know about its workings, they would think us quite moderate in what we say about it. The final conflict of principles and doctrines—truth and error, Christ and Belial—we are satisfied will be between all of the true followers of Christ, from every denomination, on one side; while their antagonists will comprise the Spiritualists, embracing the great mass of the people,

Digitized by Google

including a host of mere nominal professors of religion, on the other side. It will be a conflict—already begun — between the true and the false, light and darkness, God and the Devil. *Activity* is seen everywhere in the ranks of Satan, while the most of Christ's professed children appear to be asleep. Is it not time to heed the warning to "*watch?*" Are not the "perils" sufficient to keep us awake? Christian soldier, gird on thine armor for the conflict. This is a time when every Christian should be able to give a Bible reason for his hope.

The Bible informs us that "the spirits of devils [demons] working miracles" are to "go forth unto the *kings* of the earth, and of the *whole world*, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." (Rev. 16: 14.) The next event, in connection with this work of demons, when they may seem to be successful in their plans, is the coming of Christ. At the time when the people generally will have given up the idea that Christ is ever coming *personally*, he says: "Behold I come as a thief." (Rev. 16:15.) Though warned, as in the days of Noah and Lot, the most of the people will have no more expectation of the personal advent of Jesus, than had the antediluvians of the coming flood, or the Sodomites of their destruction when they gathered about the house of Lot, the night before they were destroyed by fire and brimstone.

Again we say, *awake*, and gird on your armor, and be ready to meet the great foe under all circumstances. Let cowards flee, but let every true child of Jesus be bravely bold for the right, if he stands alone in the conflict. Victory is sure to all true Christian soldiers. But lovers of the world, and those who conform to it and seek its friendship and honors, and chase after its silly, ungodly fashions, must not expect to stand when the hour of trial comes. He who will bow and submit to what is wrong, to secure popularity, is unworthy of eternal life with the pure and the holy, who have denied themselves of "ungodliness and worldly lusts." He who will not bear the cross has no reason to hope for the crown. Said Jesus: "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, he *cannot* be my disciple." (Luke 14:27.)

BONAPARTE AND THE PAPACY.

The Œcumenical Council which is to meet in Rome in December next, will be watched by the powers of Europe with a degree of anxiety that has attached to few conferences in modern times. It is not denied that a prominent part of the work of that Council will be the repeal of that provision in the Roman canon law, under which none but Italians are eligible to the Papacy. The object of the repeal is definitely understood to be to provide for the succession of Cardinal Bonaparte to the throne of Pius IX. In the present aspect of European politics, the Roman hierarchy exists only by the will of the French emperor. Hence, the desire of that wily monarch to perpetuate the power of his family by allying them with the Papacy. The ecclesiastical power of the Papacy, sustained by the immense military prowess of France, would form an alliance fatal to the "balance of power" upon which statesmen maintain the peace of Europe depends.

THE PEACE PROSPECTS.

The rumors of troubles on the Continent of Europe begin to come upon us thick and fast, and those who are best informed distrust Napoleon's professions of a desire for peace, and anticipate a disturbance before the summer shall have passed away. One main fact is evident to every sensible mind—the intensified hatred between France and Prussia. These two great powers are actually at war, so far as preparations for a mighty conflict are concerned. The two countries bristle with bayonets. Their arsenals are packed with ammunition. All over the country their agents may be met with purchasing horses. They stand with braced up muscles and flashing eyes, ready to spring at each other's throats. In such a state of affairs who can say how soon the first blow may be given, and the two enemies be grappling in deadly conflict, and who can place any confidence in expressions of peaceful intentions coming from such sources.

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

THE GREAT PYRAMID.

THE GREATEST ARCHITECTURAL WONDER ON EARTH.*

It was in the time of Alexander the Great, more than three hundred years before Christ, that the Greeks began their proverb about "the seven wonders of the world." These were: the Pyramids of Egypt, the walls and hanging gardens of Babylon, the temple of Diana at Ephesus, the statue of the Olympian Jupiter by Phidias, the mausoleum of Halicarnassus, the Colossus of Rhodes, and the Pharos of Alexandria. All these have disappeared except the first—the Pyramids; and of these, all are falling into ruins but one, the chief of them all, the greatest and oldest, known as the Great Pyramid of Gizeh, above Cairo, near the Nile.

It has been only within the past few years that any sort of rational appreciation of this Pyramid has found place in the minds and knowledge of men. Though it is the oldest of the standing works of man, and the largest and loftiest building, so far as we know, that ever existed upon the globe, the world has, until lately, known very little about it. Recent discoveries and verifications concerning it, by John Taylor, C. Piazzi Smyth, St. John Vincent Day, and William Petrie—all within the last ten years—show it to be, at this moment, the most wonderful thing now in existence on the face of the earth, next to the Bible itself.

It is situated on that peculiar isthmus between Africa and Asia, across which lies the great highway of trade from Europe and America to India, China, Australia, and Japan, near where Alexander located the grand commercial depot of the ancient world, and where France is now opening a ship canal, which is to unite the five great divisions of the globe. It stands on the thirtieth parallel of latitude, with an equal amount of terrestrial semi-surface to the north and south of it. Its four sides face the four cardinal points of the compass, with more exactness than can be determined by the compass itself, without the aid of calculation. It is "in the midst of the land of Egypt, and at the border thereof" (Is. 19: 19), midway between the northern and southern Egypt, and on the border of the great desert on the west, and of the fertile plain of the Nile on the east. The solid rock has been cut away to an exact level for its base. It is built of dressed and systematically adjusted limestone; and its most finished parts are of the finest granite, carried from quarries five hundred miles distant. It consists of 70,000,000 cubic feet of built masonry, the stones of which are seldom less than three or four feet thick, seven or eight long, and as many wide. It covers more than twelve acres of surface. Its height is 486 feet, and its circumference 3054 feet. It is a perfect square in its base, the four corners being set in sockets accurately cut into the rock to receive its four foundation stones. It has four equal sides terminating in a point at the top. The whole body of the structure was originally cased with polished marble from Mokattam, though most of this

* The material facts and statements given in this article, we have selected and condensed from several valuable publications, principally from "*Life and Work at the Great Pyramid*," 3 vols., 1867; "*Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid*," 1864, both by C. Piazzi Smyth, Astronomer-Royal for Scotland, who spent four months at the Great Pyramid, making the most particular and accurate measurements and observations of everything concerning it; and a work called "*The Pyramid and the Bible*," 1868, by a Scotch clergyman, of whom Piazzi Smyth says that he has thoroughly mastered the descriptive literature of the subject. There have been published, recently, several other works on the topic, the best and ablest of them agreeing in their conclusions. We think the subject of sufficient importance for us to refer to it in this way, and shall avail ourselves of an early opportunity to return to it, to give more of the facts that have been brought to light, and of the points at which they touch the Bible, the general interests of mankind, and especially the divine prophecies concerning the latter days (see Is. 19:19 and Jer. 32:20).

Digitized by Google

casing has been torn out to build Cairo. The structure is solid masonry throughout. It has but one narrow passage, which pierces it on the north side, directly on the plane of the meridian. The opening is considerably up in the masonry, and runs at an angle pointing outward to the then Pole Star. A branch from this passage leads up to two small chambers in the centre of the solid mass. The solid work is two thousand times more than the space occupied by all the known passages, chambers, or openings in it. The upper chamber has been called the King's, and the lower and smaller the Queen's chamber. One solitary piece of furniture is all that the vast edifice contains, or is ever known to have contained. It was put in when the edifice was in course of construction, and cannot be removed. It is an ark of dark porphyry or granite, a chest or lidless coffer, of exquisite finish, cut in one piece from some one of the Sifaitic mountains.

Hitherto, there has been much wild conjecture in regard to the date at which this mountain of masonry was built. Most persons are familiar with the enormous, but long since exploded figures, in which the French *savans* set forth the dates of the zodiacs and Pyramids of Egypt. But there have been professed Christians, who have done very little better. Chevalier Bunsen, in his work on "Egypt's Place in History," has put down the date of the Great Pyramid as 3280 years before Christ. Brugsch and Lepsius have put it down as between 3100 and 3500 years before Christ. And the Jew, Renan, has recently asserted that the Great Pyramid dates back at least 4500 years before our era. But all these dates are now completely and forever negatived by the Pyramid itself.

Modern astronomy has clearly demonstrated the ongoing of a great siderial cycle, known as the grand year of the Pleiades, or the precessional cycle, consisting of 25,868 solar years. Haliburton has deduced the same from the traditions of very many peoples and tongues. So great a period exceeds, by tens of thousands of years, the entire historic period of our world. There can, therefore, be no uncertainty or confusion in determining the exact date of any given observation of the relative places of the stars which mark this cycle. We know precisely how they stand to-day, as certainly as we can read the indications of the hands on the face of a clock. By calculating backwards, we know with equal certainty how they stood in any year since man was placed upon the earth. And any recorded observation of them, no matter when taken, must, therefore, contain in it the unmistakable evidence of the precise year in which it was made.

Now, it so turns out, that the Great Pyramid memorializes, in the angles of its passages and general astronomical character, a distinct, evident, and accurate observation of the relative places of certain stars which mark this grand cycle, the exact length of which is also given in the diagonals of its base. From these rocky memorials it can, therefore, be definitely ascertained when that observation was taken, and so when the Great Pyramid was built, which was 800 years before Moses, and just 2170 years before the birth of Christ. So remarkable, also, were the relative positions of the stars in this cycle in that year, as to realize a very noticeable fact in the configuration of the heavens.

In the year 2170 B.C., and only then, the Pleiades and the then Pole Star (*a* Draconis), were, at midnight in October, exactly opposite each other, and both were on the meridian together, one below and the other above the pole. The arrangements of the Pyramid have this state of the heavens built into them, astronomically correct as then existing. Sir John Herschel, thirty years ago, thus fixed upon the date of the Pyramid, as embodied unmistakably in itself; and further knowledge of the Pyramid has now greatly accumulated the evidence to the same effect. The same relative positions of these stars cannot recur, from that time, for 25,868 years, which will be more than 20,000 years hence. And, at the rate of an inch for a year, the number of years in the whole precessional cycle is built into the sum of the two diagonals of the base of this great pillar.

We thus have at least *one* solid and ascertained date in ancient chronology, settled by

Digitized by Google

the Great Pyramid, and settled to the everlasting confusion of the atheistic *savans* of France, as well as those professedly Christian writers who have done very little better in their teachings about the fabulous antiquity of Egyptian history and civilization. This, certainly, is something gained, and something of no mean consequence for the confirmation of faith in the Biblical representations of the history of man.

The *mathematical* principles embodied in this wonderful structure are very remarkable. Not only is its base an exact square, but its four sides incline toward its central axis at equal angles of 51 degrees 51 minutes, and 14.3 seconds. Its height is thence to twice its base-breadth, as the diameter to the circumference of a circle; that is to say, the height bears to the four sides of the base the same ratio that the radius bears to the circumference, though it has not been long since modern science first determined this ratio of diameter to circumference. This Great Pyramid thus stands up in its whole shape, a type and memorial of *a squaring of the circle*, performed ages and ages before the question was ever heard of amongst the schools of philosophy or the written records of mathematical investigation.

A hebdomal system also appears in this greatest and oldest of human structures. The mean proportion of the entrance-passage is one-seventh of the mean height of the grand gallery leading to the King's chamber. The side walls of this gallery are marked with seven overlappings of the stones in each. The horizontal passage-way, leading off from the lower entrance-point of the grand gallery and conducting to the Queen's chamber, is, in its entire length, just seven times the distance from a marked section starting from the north wall. This passage, at its southern end, has a step of suddenly increased depth, which is one-seventh of the whole passage—a nobler and higher unit filling out a scale of seven. The Queen's chamber, itself, is seven-sided, like a geometrical figure, or a natural crystallization—four walls, two ceilings, and one floor. Thus there is a passage-way of sevens, to a perfectly finished room of sevens.

The *astronomical* intelligence embodied in this Great Pyramid is equally wonderful. It is not only truly oriented, as above stated; that is, placed with its four sides exactly facing the four quarters of the heavens, but each side of the base of the Pyramid measures 365 cubits—the number of days in the year — with a slight addition in each, of $\frac{1}{4}\frac{1}{4}\frac{1}{0}$th, which, together, makes up for the nearly six hours additional, which in four years require one day to be added, as in "leap year." The Pyramid thus exhibits the precise number of times and parts of a time that the globe turns on its axis during its annual circuit round the sun. Each of these cubits of 25 inches, well ascertained as the sacred cubit of Moses, is a ten-millionth part of the polar semi-axis of the globe. The height of the Pyramid, multiplied by ten to the ninth power, gives the mean distance of the earth from the sun; that is, a little more than 92,000,000 miles, which is almost precisely what astronomers have most recently calculated, and most probably more accurate than our modern science, which still labors under some uncertainty on this point. The daily progress of the globe round the sun, is the grandly even quantity, in decimal arithmetic, of 10^{7+4} of the Pyramid inches. The weight of the Pyramid, upon close calculation, is evenly $\frac{1}{10}^{5\times3}$ of the weight of the globe. The situation of the Pyramid on the 30th degree of latitude, and at a height of about 2600 inches above the sea-level, its chief chamber, containing the coffer, gives, by means of two ventilating tubes, the mean temperature of the whole surface of the habitable earth = 68 degrees, Fahrenheit, or one-fifth of the space between the boiling and freezing-points of water, measured from the latter.

The porphyry or granite coffer is equally astonishing, as it stands there in its sublimely secluded and enshrined loneliness. It contains 71,250 cubic Pyramid inches of internal space, a Pyramid inch being equal to one and one-thousandth part of our inch. The mass of its sides and bottom exactly equals its internal space. The height is to the length of two of its adjacent sides as the diameter to the circumference of a circle. The exterior volume

Digitized by Google

is double the interior capacity. The volume of the bottom is one-half the volume of its sides and ends. As a whole, it is exactly one-fiftieth of the size of the chamber in which it is placed. The chamber, itself, stands upon the fiftieth course of the masonry of the entire structure. The weight of water to fill the coffer at the Pyramid temperature, being considered one ton of 2500 pounds, each such pound equals five cubic inches of the earth's mean density; so that the coffer's measure of capacity and weight are framed precisely to the mean density and specific gravity of our globe, and corresponds, in its inner contents-measure, to the sacred ark of the Mosaic tabernacle, constructed according to Divine direction.

All this is exceedingly remarkable, and forcibly challenges further attention and investigation. It amply manifests that there is something of importance in that marvellous pillar for mankind to learn—something worthy of being memorialized in a structure so astounding in itself, so providentially preserved for more than 4000 years, and only now, in these last days, unsealed to the inspection and comprehension of men. None of the many pyramids of Egypt have anything in common with it, except their general appearance. All the others are later, and only bungling imitations of this first and greatest. All the others are full of the memorials of idolatry, whilst this Great Pyramid is as free and pure from any such defilement as the Bible itself.

Who built this grand pillar, how it came to be built, what relation it has to the purposes and revelations of God, with what grand message to our generation, and others to succeed, it is freighted;—these, and cognate questions, are of the deepest interest. The most mature and scientific minds of the age are at work upon them, not without promise of valuable results; yea, with results already ascertained, very precious to Christians and to the race.

The year before Christ 2170, was about midway of the period between Noah and Abraham. If the Great Pyramid was built anywhere near that time, as now seems to be proven, then it was in existence during the whole period in which the Bible was in process of being written. If the Book of Job was composed before the time of Moses, it certainly does not date back so much as 800 years before Moses, and it is not pretended that any other book of the Bible was written before Moses. The Great Pyramid has therefore been standing during all the years in which the Sacred Scriptures have been composing. It stood when the Book of Job was written. It was 800 years old when Moses lived. It existed in the time of all Israel's prophets, during the Saviour's sojourn upon earth, when the Apostles and Evangelists wrote, and still exists. And as the greatest of all the "wonders" of the ancient world, so very marked in character, and standing in the near neighborhood in which nearly all the inspired writers lived and wrote, we would naturally expect to find some allusions to it in the Scriptures. We would at any rate think it likely that traces of it would somewhere appear in the imagery and diction of the sacred writings. Is there anything, then, in the Bible, which can fairly and truthfully be resolved into an allusion to the Pyramid?

This is a question of fact which each one can ascertain and answer for himself. For our own part, since the matter has been brought to our attention, we are prepared to say, not only that there are scriptural allusions to the Pyramid, but that some of the most pregnant statements, both of the Old and New Testaments, acquire a beauty and force, when interpreted in the light of the Pyramid idea, which they do not otherwise so strikingly contain.

The Pyramid is characteristically *five-sided*. It has four equal sides above its base, and one constituting its base. A solid model of it would be a five-sided block. Was there any connection between this and the fact that Moses has embodied the "Book of the Law"—the unique, separate, and in itself complete section which begins all written revelation,—in *one* volume of just *five books*, the Pentateuch? It certainly presents a singular coincidence with which to start, that the first erection in the Book of God is a five-sided unity, which the Rabbinical writers call "*the five-fifths of the Law.*" To this is to be added the further fact that the Moral Law, the complete code of universal human

Digitized by Google

duty, graven on *two* tables of stone by the Almighty Himself, is divided into just *twice five* precepts—the Ten Commandments.

The Pyramid is characteristically a *five-cornered* structure. It has five corner-stones; four at its base, and one at its summit; the last being vastly the most conspicuous and important. In it all the others were united, and the symmetry of the whole was perfected. From it the entire model of the Pyramid is taken. For it the whole substructure stands. And there is nothing in the building but has its final finish in that top-stone of the corner, which represents all, is the head of all, and by its position in the edifice, necessarily makes its influence felt upon every other stone. It is *the* corner-stone.

Compare this with Job 37 : 4–7. In that passage the allusion to fastenings of the foundations, or, as in the margin, the making of them to sink in sockets prepared for them, is most strikingly realized in the four foundation corners of the Great Pyramid. But, leaving this, what is to be said of the singing together of the morning stars, and the shouting of the sons of God? In spite of all ordinary architectural ideas, the reader involuntarily connects these with the *completion*, not with the *beginning* of the grand structure contemplated. Yet the language is unmistakable, that all this singing and shouting was *at the laying of the corner-stone thereof.* What corner-stone? There is necessarily more than one in a foundation. Which one, then, above another, so conspicuous and pre-eminent, was it, if not the fifth and finishing corner-stone, according to the Pyramidal idea? This realizes the entire conception, with a fulness, naturalness, and beauty which belong to no other known species of architecture. Shall we not therefore believe that the greatest and grandest of all earth's buildings, which was standing at the time, was in view in this grandest of the biblical pictures of the building of the world? It is certainly figurative. The author of the Book of Job knew better than to suppose the earth built upon a plain. In chapter 26 : 7, it is distinctly said, that the earth is *hung upon nothing.* This architectural idea is therefore merely accommodated for more vivid and detailed description. And the same is realized in nothing known to man so entirely as in the Great Pyramid.

Compare, in like manner, Zech. 4 : 7, "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain"—rectified, straight-lined, angularized into architectural proportions,—"and he shall bring forth *the headstone thereof* with shoutings, crying Grace, grace unto it." Is not this again the Pyramidal idea? What other sort of a fabric is so literally a straight-lined and rectified "great mountain?" What other kind of structure has one particular stone, so pre-eminently "*the headstone*," in which everything is completed to the joy and admiration of the beholders?

Refer, also, to Psalm 108 : 22, 23. "The stone which the builders refused is become the *headstone of the corner;* this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." Here is a *corner* above all other corners—a corner-*stone* brought to its place long after the laying of the foundations, and the building of the walls. And yet that stone is *the head* and climax of the entire structure. What is there to fit the description but the Pyramid idea?

So again, in Eph. 2 : 20, Paul compares the Church to an edifice, in which the saints are the stones, "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building*" is "*fitly framed together.*" The headstone in a pyramid includes all the other stones, down to the foundation. All the angles and proportions of the structure are in that one stone. It covers, protects, stands for, and finishes out all the other parts. And this answers to the Apostle's figure, and fills the terms of his description, as nothing else does or can.

The same Pyramidal capstone, before its visible elevation to its place on the topmost corner, may also be identified with Peter's "stone of stumbling and rock of offence," to unbelievers. (1 Pet. 2 : 8.) Such a physically inconvenient five-cornered block, always with one acute angle stuck up in the air, so different from every other stone used in a building, and seemingly so ill-suited to be incorporated into a

Digitized by Google

regular wall, forms the exact likeness of that stone which the builders refused; and also of that "on which, whosoever shall fall, shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall [especially if from its high place on the top of the Pyramid], it will grind him to powder." (Matt. 22 : 24.) Indeed, there is nothing that so completely answers to the image of our blessed Lord, viewed as *the corner-stone*, either in His relation to believers or to unbelievers, as this self-same "headstone of the corner" in the Pyramidal structure. Shall we not, therefore, believe that it is referred to in the passages which so describe Him?

It might be objected, that no such topstone is now at the summit of the Great Pyramid; a large flat surface being found there. But it must be considered that the casing of the structure has been torn away, and that four thousand years have spent their force upon it. The completing capstone was necessarily a part of the casing, which is gone, all but a few stones. That such a capstone belonged to the complete edifice, or was designed to belong to it in the finished plan, it would be silly to dispute. It was the chief thing in the picture. C. Piazzi Smyth is convinced, not only that such a capstone once crowned the Great Pyramid, but that it is yet somewhere in existence, and will be found. He quotes an early mediæval traveller, M. Belon, who says that he saw, in the Valley of Jehosaphat at Jerusalem, the "triangular stone" to which the Saviour referred in Matt. 22 : 44. Of course this is of little account, and proves nothing to the point before us. But the showing of a relic in Palestine, described in the usual method of a Pyramid, and directly connected with the passage cited, harmonizes with the doctrine that the Pyramid idea is inwoven with scriptural diction. It also suggests the existence of some point of connection between the sacred people and the Great Pyramid, as well as favors the suspicion that the model and capstone of it, so often used as a simile for the highest scriptural purposes, may yet be discovered, hid away in some place at present secluded from the observation of mankind. Be that as it may, what the Psalmist says of the more spiritual truths relating to the corner-stone of human salvation, may also be applied, with equal propriety, to the more material image under which it was prophetically presented to him, namely, that "*It is marvellous in our eyes.*"

WORDS TO FAITHFUL WATCHERS.

To the few earnest watchers scattered abroad through Christendom: Greeting. Ye members of Christ's body, grace be to you, and peace from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; the glorious Pantocrat, our Head, our Lord, our King, and our God! Let us commune together a little concerning our hopes of His coming.

I. Some Heart-questionings.

He has not come yet. Should any one ask us, Who? the answer is, The Lord from Heaven. To some it is a sad reflection that He has not come ere this.

Will He come at all? Is not such an expectation a wild delusion;—at best harmless, but still a delusion? The Sacred Word settles this question. "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, will so come, in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." (Acts 1 : 11.) "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14 : 3.) "After a long time, the Lord of those servants cometh." (Matt. 14 : 19.)

Is it right to be on the watch for Him, in contradistinction to a mere belief that He is coming some time or other? In answer to this, the Church sneers, or is silent. But what is the divine dictum? Jesus says: "Be like men that wait for their Lord." (Luke 12 : 36.) They tell us that our Lord is "death." We know better. We know well who it is that bought us. Jesus tells us, "Watch." (Mark 13 : 35.) Jesus says, "Be ready." (Luke 12 : 40.) Jesus says, "Blessed are *those* servants whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching." (Luke 12 : 37.) Strange! One would think it a matter of course that He being absent, and intending to return, they would be expecting Him. But it seems not!

Digitized by Google

Again we read: "Hope entirely" (Greek τελειως, *i. e.*, steadily, singly, absolutely, completely, *altogether*, as your grand object and aim), "for the grace brought unto you in the apocalypse" (unveiling, disclosing), "of Jesus Christ." Now when the Holy Ghost thus tells us to (as we would say in our English idiom), "set all our hopes" on the coming of Jesus, objections are impotent—lighter than chaff—less than nothing—vanity.

Were it possible for anybody to be yet in doubt respecting his duty, the following would settle it. "The grace of God teaches us to live, receiving and earnestly awaiting that happy hope and manifestation of the glory of our great Saviour and God Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:12, 13.) And "We" (Christians) "are earnestly expecting out of heaven the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phil. 3:20.)

Has God fixed a time for the Saviour's reappearing, or will the period of His return be governed by circumstances? An examination of the inspired record, whence alone we can draw any positive information on such a subject, shows that in His past dealings with the children of men, God has had fixed seasons; indeed, He has frequently announced beforehand the precise time. The departure of the children of Israel from Egypt took place "on the self-same day" before pointed out; and as soon as the predicted 120 years had expired, the flood set in. It was when the sceptre had departed from Judah (according to the previous announcement), that the Saviour appeared on earth. The captivity in Babylon lasted just 70 years, as the Lord had spoken.

But we are not left to draw our conclusions from analogy alone. We have positive statements respecting the precise span of time, in days, weeks, or years, that will intervene between the giving of the prophecy, and events intimately connected with the Lord's coming and kingdom; for the restoration of the Jews, to which more especially these numbers and dates refer, will (we know positively), be preceded by the personal presence of Him, even the Messiah, who is to sit upon the throne of David. There is a definite answer given to the question of the Holy One, How long? In reply to it, Daniel was informed that there would be 2300 evening mornings. So, also, Gabriel, when sent forth expressly in order to give Daniel understanding, told him that seventy "sevens" were determined upon the Jews and the holy city. No one denies these things. All can read the record.

Is it possible for us proximately to know the time? The reply is, that there can be no doubt of it. The very first vision in Daniel, that of Nebuchadnezzar, points out that the setting up of the kingdom of heaven will be preceded by four world-powers, the last of which is the Roman. The first three have come and gone, and the Roman power is now in existence, in a modified form. It has existed for the last 1800 years and more. And, we may add, there can be little doubt that it will shortly reassume, to a large extent, under a confederation of ten kings, with one imperial head, its ancient shape.

Our Lord also informs us that the end of the age will be preceded by the general preaching of the Gospel for a witness; and the revival of missions is one of the marked features of our times. It is also a plain and indisputable inference from holy writ, that there will be, just before the coming of the Lord, a partial regathering of the Jews in the Holy Land. Their present condition, in such marked contrast with that of the past centuries, is an unerring index of their proximate return; and more especially so in connection with the drift of public opinion, and the political necessities of the day.

We have, also, in the Sacred Scriptures, detailed statements of the moral condition of the world, and of the tone and fate of the outward church immediately preceding the end.

And, lastly, specific phenomena are pointed out to us; either new in themselves (as in 1 Tim. 4:1–3 and 2 Thess. 2:3–10), or else marked intensifications of former judgments, such as wars, pestilences, famines, earthquakes, and appearances in the sky. Concerning these things the Lord, in the most positive and unequivocal manner, tells us that when they transpire, we may know that His coming is near.

Digitized by Google

We are also told, in repeated passages, that the information vouchsafed us on this subject is such that, if we take heed to it, we cannot be taken by surprise.

It may be, too, that still more precise information has been given us, if we are sufficiently interested, attentive, and studious to perceive it, and sufficiently discerning to make ourselves masters of it. Without insisting on this point we would direct attention to the numerous types which God in His wisdom has arranged. The precision with which, in past events, the antitypes of some have corresponded, certainly gives a well-grounded reason for believing that there may be, and will be, a similarly exact correspondence in future antitypes. In 2 Pet. 3 : 8, it is said : "Beloved, let not this one thing escape you, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." The phrase used seems to imply that here is something that does not appear on the surface, but which by close scrutiny may be discovered. The words used (λανθανετω ὑμας) correspond precisely with the Latin phrase "latere aliquem," which scholars will understand, and from which word, latere, we derive the term, "*latent.*" And the sense of the Church, in its earliest and purest days, always was, that a parallel is here pointed out between the seven days of creation, and the duration of the present mundane condition.

Were any doubt remaining respecting the possibility of our knowing the proximate time, it would be removed by the words of our Lord, which are decisive on this point; for He says: "When ye shall see these things come to pass, *know* that it is nigh—even at the doors." (Mark 13 : 29.)

II. Cautions about Definite Time.

It is an intensely interesting and important question, *Can we ascertain the definite time of the Lord's return?* And this involves the other question, Is His coming imminent? although, indeed, we might know that it is imminent, without being able to discover the very day.

We have thought it would be well to print a few thoughts on this subject for the sake of some earnest watchers, who, perhaps, have been disappointed in the hope of welcoming our adorable Saviour before now; and who, in view of the thickening and plain signs of the times, feeling weary and fainting in their minds, may have been tempted by our enemy to adopt the unhappy language of one of old, and say: "Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?" Not that such dear brethren could ever leave off loving Him, or let go their faith in His appearing; but still, becoming perplexed in their minds, they may have been led to believe that it is impossible to ascertain anything definite respecting the comparative nearness of His coming. And thus, yielding to the current unbelief in the Church on this point—for the world does not even know Him, much less love Him—they might be found unexpectant, and so be left behind to endure those things which the always watching and praying ones have a promise of being counted worthy to escape.

In a matter like this, dogmatism would be particularly out of place. Even if we thought we could discover in holy writ, the very day pointed out, we would not, at this stage, venture to do more than to give a modest opinion. However, the fact that many who thought they had made the discovery, proved to have been mistaken, of itself militates nothing against the legitimacy of the inquiry. Those more recent failures only prove the propriety of that extreme caution on this point, which we have always inculcated in this serial. The lapse of time will throw a clearer light on things that to previous students were obscure; just in the same way as, in the *final* denouement, *all* difficulties must vanish. Still the question remains: Has the Lord spoken on *this* point? Has He recorded statements, from which a clear inference can be made respecting the precise time?

A careful and reverent reader of the Holy Scriptures easily perceives that it was the will of the Lord that His people in all ages should be left in an expectant attitude, uncertain but what He might return in the existing generation. The object plainly was to induce them to lead such a holy life, and have such aspira-

Digitized by Google

tions, and corresponding preparations, for higher degrees of glory, as nothing but such an expectation should excite. He tells us so, indeed. For it is written: "*Every one* that hath *this* hope" (of being like Him at His *appearing*) "*purifieth* himself, even as He is pure." (1 John 3:3.) That is, he aims at the Divine model. Now in order to keep alive this hope, it is necessary to be "waiting for the Son of God from heaven" (1 Thess. 1:10), and in order to an intelligent and expectant waiting, there must always seem to be a possibility, and perhaps even a probability in the apprehension of the believer, of the Lord's instant coming. At the same time it is evident that delay could not be intended to discourage this feeling; rather, in the nature of the case, each successive year would intensify it. Our Lord has made a fearful statement of the consequences that will ensue, in the case of those servants who are induced by the disappointment of previous expectations, as well as by other causes, to say that He delays His coming. And, moreover, it is apparent on but a little reflection, that the time must come at last when the proof will be absolute. Infinite wisdom and love so arranged the matter as to leave room in all past time for such a waiting, without making statements which in any way were calculated to mislead, or compromise divine truth.

On these general grounds, a present expectation in our day, too, would be warranted.

Yet it is natural and reasonable that as the time of the end approaches, knowledge on this great subject will increase, growing out of the development of events; and also that more light will be specially vouchsafed from above to guide inquirers who have Daniel's heart and feelings. What! should not the Lord give an intimation to His own? With reverence be it said, this would not be like Him. Even of Abraham, though not immediately concerned, the Lord said: "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" (Gen. 18:17.) The Scripture says, too: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7.) And there is a special promise given concerning the clearer understanding of the prophetic word in the last times, for we read (Dan. 12:9, 10), "The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end: the wise shall understand."

Therefore we need not hesitate to assume that if we really stand on the verge of the close of the present dispensation, we have a clearer insight than the saints who preceded us.

III. What is Certain.

In pursuing our investigations, we must distinguish between what is certain and what is only probable and unascertained.

From the declarations of Scripture, it is certain that *the coming of Jesus is premillennial.* That is, there will be a universal prevalence of righteousness; but the coming of Jesus will precede it. They do but dream, who fancy that present ecclesiastical instrumentalities will convert the world. This fact lies on the surface, and has been abundantly proved in these pages. Further, the wickedness of the time immediately preceding the advent will be great, and will exceed that of any previous period. Also, there will be a form of godliness, without the power thereof. And it may be clearly inferred that the Christian Church, in its outward form and expression, will share the same fate of the Jewish or patriarchal. "If *salt* have lost its savor, wherewith shall *it* be salted?" "I will spue thee out of my mouth."

It is also plain that there will be several stages in the advent, and a *gradual* development of God's purposes, as on previous occasions in His dealings with the children of men. The day of judgment is not a period of twenty-four hours, but a period of rule exercised by the Lord and His saints, which may cover a thousand years. All these things have heretofore been pointed out in these pages, and we need not now repeat them.

The distinction, likewise, between the Lord's *parousia* and his *epiphany*, is clearly marked in the Greek Testament. He is secretly present in our neighborhood, and His saints are gathered to Him, *before* He is manifested, visibly, and gloriously, and fearfully to the world. We have also shown the strong reasons for believing that whilst the saints will all be removed from the earth prior to the public appearing,

Digitized by Google

they will not be all taken simultaneously, but in separate companies, according to their degree of expectancy and preparedness. To the careful student of the prophetic word, these positions appear impregnable. Indeed, the proof is of such a nature that, while we love and honor our dissenting brethren, we are convinced that they have not fully and fairly examined the subject, though they may fancy and persuade themselves that they have done so.

When we search the Sacred Word to see what is revealed concerning the precise time of the advent, we meet, first of all, with apparent contradictions. We need hardly stop to say that there can be no real contradictions in Holy Writ. They are only apparent. It is only in our apprehension of the Scriptures that these contradictions lie.

Moreover, it is well to remember that, whatever apparent contradictions we may meet with, they cannot exceed those which were such a stumbling-block to the disciples in the days of our Lord's first advent. Who could be surprised if their hopes of the kingdom, as connected with the prophet of Nazareth, died with him? And, in the Sacred Oracles, what did they find? A root out of a dry ground—no beauty that we should desire Him—a Man of sorrows—cut off out of the land of the living. (Is. 53.) How could these things be true of one of whom it was written: "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O Most Mighty: God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Ps. 45.) And: "In his days shall the righteous flourish. He shall have dominion from sea to sea; yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him." That the disciples were inexcusable for their dulness, is plain from our Lord's words: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have written." It was preconceived opinion that perverted their judgment—the notions they had imbibed from the teaching of youth. And let this be a warning to us not to say that anything announced by the Holy Ghost cannot be, because, forsooth, it seems to us strange and unlikely. Let God speak, and we will hear.

Let us look at some of these apparent contradictions, and, perhaps, our judgment may be thereby assisted in forming an opinion respecting the possibility of ascertaining the definite time.

We read that the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and that He will send forth His angels with great sound of a trumpet. We are told that the virgins, both wise and foolish, will go out to meet the bridegroom. (Matt. 25.) We find a description of Antichrist enthroned as God. (2 Thess. 2.) We find that many will be beheaded by him. (Rev. 20:4; 13:15.) We find the sun and moon darkened, and various other declarations, showing that the appearing of the Lord will be ushered in with the utmost pomp, fearfulness, and magnificence.

But, on the other hand, we read that our Lord says: "Ye know not when the time is." "The day of the Lord shall so come, as a thief in the night." "Behold, I come as a thief," etc. Now, if it be true that our Lord's advent is public and yet secret, is secret and yet public, there must be a secret stage that precedes the public transaction. Thus much has heretofore already been plainly seen.

But, we would ask: May we not go a step farther? May it not be true that there is a difference both as regards the saints themselves, and their knowledge of the time?

If we attentively consider the inspired delineation of coming events, we perceive it is impossible but that the church will be fully awake and informed before the Great Tribulation; although, indeed (as has been shown in a previous article), some, even then, will hesitate, like Lot's wife, and be "left" to enter it,—living pillars among the moral wreck, and still "salt" among corruption. The confederation of the ten kings within the limits of the old Roman earth, and the covenant made with the Jews, will, with unerring certainty, we submit, point out to Christians their exact location on the prophetic chart of time. For what do we find? We find the virgins (that is, the church,) consisting of both wise and foolish, going out to meet the bridegroom; which proves that they now understand the times. And, *after that*, a

Digitized by Google

considerable interval; during which, while the bridegroom *tarries*, they grow sleepy, though by no means relinquishing their waiting attitude. There can be little doubt that the wise virgins are taken *before* the Great Tribulation begins; for though *they* are not the bride, it is in his capacity as *bridegroom* that he receives them.

If we now inquire what is the cause of the going forth of the virgins, or the waking up of the church, we find it in the sudden and unexpected *translation of the eagles*;—those first ready and expectant saints, of whom we have spoken in a former article. For Matt. 25 : 1 tells us that "then," after the eagles are taken, the virgins will go forth. This rapture of the eagles will have been a demonstration indeed; a demonstration that the advent is premillennial, and that the Sacred Scriptures mean just what they say. Then will the modern "spiritualizing" appear in its true light, as folly; we had almost said wickedness.

But where the church needs such a demonstration—where no less will answer—there cannot be an expectancy and consecration sufficient for a share in the superior blessing.

IV. Date of First Translation a Secret.

If we ask whether the Sacred Scriptures give us anything to guide us respecting the precise time of this initial event? we can only say, that, with our present light, we have failed to see that they do; and it does not seem likely that even the *year* in which this great event will occur can ever be ascertained beforehand with certainty. Indeed, we think that uncertainty, as to the absolute time, seems an integral part of that very condition by virtue of which the prior rapture of the eagles take place. Hence, it seems that neither the day nor the hour of their removal will be known. But, immediately afterwards, in all probability, the interdiction will be removed, and the ancient conflict between Satan and God be renewed, and accompanied with great supernatural demonstrations. In Matt. 24:24, we are informed that great miracles of evil will be wrought. And in the height of the crisis and the culmination of the contest between light and darkness, God and Satan, and before the harvest of the earth is reaped, an angel will fly through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice: "The hour of God's judgment is come."

Nevertheless, since the Old Testament histories are typical of the matters of the kingdom, and since all the numerous types and shadows have a strictly corresponding antitype and reality, it seems to us probable that there is a type somewhere, too, of the Eagle Translation: it might not, however, throw any light upon the time. In Enoch, we have a memorable case, which is, undoubtedly, typical. But as there are, in all probability, a number of successive translations, Enoch's translation may, after all, not be typical of the rapture of the eagles, specifically, but, rather of that large body of the general church symbolized by "the wise virgins;" or, perhaps, of both as a class, and of others who might, in a similar manner, be removed from the earth by a sudden and *mysterious* disappearance.

For it must not be forgotten, that though the wise virgins do not symbolize the bride, they go in to the marriage; from which exalted privilege the foolish, for want of instant readiness, are excluded. However, it should not be overlooked, that it is only as bridegroom that he knows them not.

Enoch was "taken" 669 years before the flood; for Methusaleh died in the year of the flood, and he was 300 years old when his father was translated. Perhaps these years symbolize the number of days intervening between the translation of the wise virgins, and the beginning of the Great Tribulation, corresponding to the flood. The translation of Elijah, we suppose, symbolizes the visible removal of a large body of saints subsequently, during or after the Great Tribulation.

When we look at other probable types, we think mainly of four: Noah's being shut into the ark seven days before the flood began; the seven days' consecration of the priests (Lev. 8, and Ex. 29 : 35); the two wave-loaves at Pentecost; and the taking of Esther to the house of the king. To these might possibly be added one or two others. The first two seem strongly to foreshadow a removal into the presence of

Digitized by Google

the Son of Man seven years before the close of the dispensation. The feast of Pentecost strikes us with peculiar force; it, likewise, is just seven weeks after the Passover. However, perhaps *its* antitype is in the very presence of the Lord in heaven; when all those who are, "a kind of first fruits of his creatures" (James 1:18), shall have been gathered in; an earnest of the mighty, predicted, eternal harvest, when He who poured out his soul unto death shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.

Of the recorded wonders, wars of the Lord, giants, etc., of ancient days (on which a part of heathen mythology is traditionally based), it is incredulous; but the pregnant future, as foreshadowed in the Sacred Scriptures, teems with greater wonders; for the destiny of the elect is, to be purified unto Jesus, a *peculiar* people, zealous (in eternity) of good works. For, said Jesus, "Verily, verily, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and *greater* works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." (John 14:12.) He also uttered the weighty saying: "The Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth; and He will show him greater works than these; that ye may marvel. The Son quickeneth whom He will." (John 5:20–21.)

But the most significant adumbration of all seems to us to be the transfer of Esther to the king's palace. The whole wonderful book of Esther is a most marvellous type of the bride. Esther was brought into the king's palace in the tenth month, which is the month Tebeth; that is to say (according to the best insight of the writer), in the month of January. We have often pondered deeply whether this most magnificent transfer has reference to the translation, or to the marriage of the Lamb—a marriage which is a literal one. (Rev. 19:7–9.) Our judgment inclines to the latter. For the marriage is just before the descent of the Lord with all his saints; by which time the day (reign) of the Lord (if we read Daniel and the types aright), will have already lasted seven years; and it was in the seventh year of Ahasuerus's reign that Esther was taken into his house royal.

We need hardly say, that we wish to avoid with the utmost care, every appearance of dogmatism in the views and conjectures expressed; that is, where they are only inferences drawn from earnest study; for there are things settled by a "Thus saith the Lord," in which no divergence of opinion can be allowed. But such light as we have we are willing to impart, and can truly say that we are ever anxious to learn the smallest portion of divine truth, from whatever quarter it may come.

On the whole, then, we conclude we are entirely at a loss to find any guide to definite time as to the removal of the Eagle saints. Therefore, it seems to us that nothing remains but an attitude of earnest, eager, instant, expectancy and readiness.

V. The Time Draweth Nigh.

In the ground of our souls is a conviction that the time when the doors of the pavilion in the secret of Jesus' presence will open to receive and close in, those who, like Paul, are striving for the "prize," *is imminent*. Therefore, be not moved from *the hope* of the Gospel. O greatly beloved, be strong; yea, be strong! Soon, in the chambers prepared, ye shall be hidden from the present strife of tongues. (Psalm 31:20.) Let all who will, say: "My Lord delayeth his coming;" let not our souls come unto their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united!

We see no reason to doubt the substantial truth of what we have hitherto been permitted to testify on this subject. The last signs and the prophetic periods, in their minor foreshadowing fulfilment, seem to be appearing and running out before our eyes. What remains but the grand and literal fulfilment? If there is a comparative lull in the late wonderful and general commotions, is it not indicated in the words: "When they shall say peace and safety, etc.?" Is it not the stillness of the twilight preceding the "first watch" of the night? If the keenness of expectation of decisive events has somewhat subsided, both among pre- and post-millennial Christians, does not this point, in the case of believers too, to the words: "In such an hour as ye think not" (Matt. 24:44), and to these: "As a *snare* (Luke 21:35) shall it come on *all* them that dwell on the face of the whole earth."

Digitized by Google

And observe that this is just after the declaration: "See and know of your own selves, that summer is now nigh at hand;" and "Then lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh:" verses 30 and 28. In close succession we have had wars and rumors of wars; nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; famines and pestilences; and lastly, as indicated by our Lord, earthquakes in divers places (Matt. 24:6–7); and latterly, more or less of them simultaneously. There is beginning to be on earth perplexity, and distress of nations, and men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. (Luke 21:26.) We see the beginning of what is predicted in 1 Tim. 4:1–3, and Rev. 16:13–14. These seducing spirits are developing their designs more and more. We see ungodliness increasing, and in a fair way to attain, before long, antediluvian proportions. We see a degenerate and lukewarm church fraternizing and commingling with the world. We see it no longer enduring sound doctrine, particularly on prophetic subjects; and practically and largely too, on the fundamental truths of the fall and redemption. We see knowledge increasing, and men running to and fro. Nor is this less remarkable with regard to those prophetic truths to which the prediction of the increase of knowledge and activity properly relates.

E. E. R.

FREEDOM.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—JOHN 8:36.

THE love of liberty is by nature implanted within the breasts of the greater portion of mankind. Unnumbered wars have been waged, and unnumbered crimes committed in all ages, to attain liberty or to retain it in possession. Many nations, however, have in all periods of the world groaned beneath the yoke of cruel bondage, because they, from infancy, were educated to reverence and fear the established powers, believing them to be, as indeed they were, "*ordained of God.*" Such nations have, in some instances, by gradual steps and progressive legislation, advanced to the possession of civil or religious freedom, and, by their own inherent strength, through an influx of light. Such progression is seldom unaccompanied by internal revolution and great convulsions of the body politic. Other nations have been led to the attainment of comparative freedom, only by the extraneous pressure of foreign war, overthrowing the tyranny of ages, and infusing the desire for liberal institutions and enlightened government. It cannot be denied that the ancient despotisms, the strongholds of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny, are being universally shaken, and that a freedom of thought and action is to-day enjoyed on soil where, of old, the ignorance of superstition ruled, and the will of the oppressor was paramount. It is now become the object of legislation to confer liberty on the physical man by breaking the yokes of ancient bondage, to impart liberty of thought and utterance to the man of mind, through the gifts of free speech and an untrammelled press; and religious toleration is now extended where once the bigotry of priestcraft triumphed and ecclesiastical bondage was endured. But although this is PROGRESS, and although the interests of Christ may prosper in their degree by this extension of liberty, still it neither is, nor can become progress Godward and heavenward, while, as it ever was, "the carnal mind is enmity against God," and while "they that are in the flesh *cannot* please God." Satan is still "the god of this world," and the extension of liberty can only modify, but not arrest his operations. Still less can it destroy his power for evil. Adversity is not unfavorable to the development of spiritual energy and the perfecting of a Christian life. Were all men regenerate, universal liberty would indeed be beneficial, and exist spontaneously, but the masses of mankind are, as ever, in the darkness of unbelief, and the ancient evils have only assumed new forms. In the domain of letters, while Bibles and tracts are translated into all languages and industriously circulated, the field is equally open to the propagation and dissemination of that worldly and infidel literature, which has so greatly modified, in late

Digitized by Google

years, the standard of Gospel holiness, and has introduced a laxity of doctrine which must eventually prove pernicious in the extreme. Spiritual liberty is now degenerated into a license to become an Infidel, a Mormon, or a Pagan; these systems of error and wickedness being protected by law in the land in which we are now living. It is thus manifest, that mankind will never attain true freedom by political reforms, nor by the diffusion of any principles that are of human origin; but while the law is immutable, that compels a corrupt tree to bring forth evil fruit, even so long will the fruits of the unrenewed mind, although possessing exterior excellence, still embody the latent evil, and contain within themselves the elements of their own dissolution. It is the glory of Christianity that it is adapted to the necessities of all classes, and that, like its Author, it is self-existent, not dependent on the favor of human governments for its life, nor receiving its perfection of development through external prosperity. Christ chose His apostles from an inferior social grade, that it might be manifest that "the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us." The liberty which the Gospel reveals, demands our attention, and we perceive by the text that it is not attained by any power of our own, but is the gift of Christ.

We observe first, that it is not *political* freedom. The voice of the Spirit is on this point decisive. Writing to the Church in Rome, the stronghold of Pagan authority, Paul, speaking by the Holy Ghost, enjoins implicit subjection to imperial rule, and commands the payment of tribute, because "they are God's ministers." From Rom. 13, we learn that it is not the mind of God that the Church should for a moment contemplate the overthrow of any secular power or resist the authority of the civil magistrate. Peter, also, explicitly commands subjection to established authority. (1 Pet. 2.) This subjection enjoined, is a prohibition to bear arms against the reigning prince, and a command to render all obedience and service, which does not involve disloyalty to Christ. When disloyalty to Christ was enjoined, to suffer *with* Christ was the Christian's privilege. Our Lord himself paid tribute to Cæsar, and did not emancipate his own country from the Roman yoke. The same law of subjection is enforced by the Divine Spirit as authoritative in *all* the social relations. The Church, "which is not of the world, even as He was not of the world," should walk in the light of God's commands.

Again, it is not *religious* freedom, in the commonly accepted sense of the expression, that our Saviour bestows. It is by no means the mind of God that every man should worship Him according to the dictates of his individual conscience. An unenlightened conscience is but a poor exponent of the mind of God, and but a sorry representative of that "Spirit of Truth," whose office it is to "guide into all truth." We may not think as we please concerning the inspired utterances of revelation. The Bible declares explicitly, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him." He only will be judged in the light that conscience alone bestows, to whom conscience alone was given. The Gospel "brings into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." This condition of mind is remote from the popular conception of religious liberty. The complete subjection of the individual will to the revealed will of God, and the continued acknowledgment of our own inability to accomplish aught in our own strength, or to know aught in our own wisdom; *these* are elementary parts of that "glorious liberty" unto which the children of God are called. Thirdly, it is not liberty to "continue in sin that grace may abound." The name and the office of Christ proclaim salvation *from* sin. Are there not multitudes who vainly suppose they have discovered a way to unite the service of Christ with the love of mammon? But, a spiritual resurrection, whereby we "walk in newness of life," must be preceded by the crucifixion of "our old man, that the body of sin may be destroyed." We must experience the death of nature, ere we can live the life of God. While the Apostle declares that "they that are in the flesh cannot please God," he hesitates not to assert that the children of God "are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in

Digitized by Google

them." We must become the slaves of Jesus Christ, in order to acquire perfect freedom. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are *not your own?* For ye are *bought with a price.*" The *intellectual* part in man does not escape the crucifixion to which the flesh must be subjected in all who would lead a divine life. It is also "of the earth, earthy." "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." The multitudes who find the Scriptures filled with irreconcilable contradictions, know not this. Attempting with the unassisted powers of an unregenerate mind, to grasp the revelations of infinite wisdom and eternal truth, they stumble and fall, for they possess not the enlightening power of the Spirit of God.

Nor must it be supposed that reason and faith are antagonistic. It is in accordance with sound reason that the creature should *believe* whatever the Creator may reveal. If faith be made subservient to reason, if we believe no more than we are able to comprehend, we must, of necessity, reject the miraculous narratives of the Bible. Pursuing this path, we soon land in infidelity. Thus, Christ bestows no liberty, either to think or to do as we please.

What then is true freedom? Its nature is spiritual and not carnal, for it enables us to "worship God in the spirit, to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh." It exempts us from all bondage to ceremonial observance, whether Jewish or Papal. On this head its utterance is: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled with the yoke of bondage." Again: "Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath." And if the ancient ceremonies, instituted by God himself, are no longer binding, how little regard do we owe the modern inventions which some have devised?

Secondly, we are free from all observance of the moral law, as a covenant of works, as a means to justification before God. For "the law worketh wrath;" and "if righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law." Accepting Christ, therefore, as the end of the law, whether ceremonial or moral, and being justified by faith in His blood as the propitiation for our sins, we assume a position which enables the Divine Spirit, "Christ in us," to impart the true freedom, which is,

Thirdly, deliverance from the *power* of sin. It is evident that this is a divine and supernatural gift. It is no less than the impartment of a new and divine nature; the *old* having been proved by the workings of the law to be utterly without power to love or obey God. Is it an idle question that the Apostle addresses to the Corinthian Church, when he inquires, "Know ye not your own selves how that JESUS CHRIST is in you?" If not, can we doubt that we may realize the fulfilment of the promise that "sin shall not have dominion over us?" The work is Christ's, and the glory also His.

We can only glance at a few of the results which flow from the possession of this freedom. First. The *appetites* are subjected; the flesh being no longer the master but the servant of the soul. What a glorious liberty is this! The exclamation no longer is: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" for "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made free from the law of sin and death" in the members. No longer the slave to divers lusts, the body is now become a "temple of the Holy Ghost." Again, the *mind*, with its vain imaginations and desires, is no longer alienated from God, for "every thought is brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." Christ reigns over the kingdom of mind, as over the powers and capacities of the physical man. The soul is emancipated. We no longer "fulfil the desires of the flesh and of the mind," but possess "the mind of Christ." Hereby we discern the vanity of all earthly wisdom, and the transitory nature of all human attainments. Thus the WILL,

Digitized by Google

which expresses the desires and tendencies of the mind, is wholly subjected to the will divine. Being made partakers of His nature, to fulfil the will of God is all that we desire; for the creatures have lost their power over us. The affections also participate in the freedom that Christ imparts. They are centred in God. "*Love* is the fulfilling of the law;" and to love God supremely, supposes the affections emancipated from all selfish tendencies; as God accepts not a divided heart. The natural affections must not conflict with the love we owe to God. All natural ties, all material wealth, yea, ourselves also, with all our powers and capacities, must be placed at the disposal of Christ, ere we can receive the freedom that He alone can bestow. It is on this ground that the battle is fought and victory achieved. Until the HEART is the Lord's; until the "affections are set on things above, and not on things on the earth," Satan will triumph; the appetites clamor; the mind rebel. Christ entering, ejects the creatures from the temple of the soul, as of old He drove the exchangers from His temple at Jerusalem.

The soul being freed, we regard not the honor that comes from man, but love the praise of God. "That which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God." The ambitions of the "sons of God," like their affections, are heavenly. "The fear of man that bringeth a snare," is also overcome. We shall be faithful, fearing neither censure, ridicule, nor persecution. The desire for wealth is eradicated; for "they that *will* be rich, fall into temptation and a snare." Again, this condition of freedom gives victory over the world: "for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father." The new and divine nature begotten of the Holy Ghost, has no affinity with these things. The *necessities* of the body truly must be met, but the affections themselves are spiritual, and no longer subjected to the control of the senses. Christ also frees us from all political bias and entanglement. How can he who has been illuminated to discern how impossible it is for the natural man to please God, expect aught but failure and disappointment as the ultimate fruits of human legislation? Can any one dream that either of the great parties representing the political world impersonates practical Christianity?

This freedom may be attained and enjoyed in any station. It may grace the kingly throne, or abide with the prisoner in his dungeon. "Art thou called being a slave? Care not for it." Paul himself was a prisoner, and wore a chain.

How circumscribed and unscriptural are the opinions of those who teach that Christ came to impart civil liberty or physical freedom. It is the HEART that He emancipates from the thraldom of sin. The external condition may assist or may retard the operations of the Divine Spirit, but cannot prevent the work of regeneration; therefore subjection to the established power, be it despotic or republican, is everywhere enjoined in the New Testament Scriptures as the duty of the Church. This state of freedom we have considered is achieved and retained only in the performance of every known obligation, and in the practice of unfaltering self-denial. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts." The physical earth must await the *personal* return of our Saviour, ere it can rejoice in the removal of the curse, and "deliverance from the bondage of corruption." The same holds true with us, as it regards the renovation of the body. But the soul of man has not to wait. The transforming power of the Spirit we may to-day begin to experience. While we await the Saviour's return, let us "walk in the light," rejoicing in "the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Humility is an essential element of this divine freedom, for it cannot coexist with pride. "The garment of praise" will clothe the soul, for the new nature is imparted that we may declare His power and glory, "who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light." But "who is sufficient for these things?"

W. R. P.

"BE ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VII. AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER, 1869. Nos. 8 & 9.

Special Contributions.

THE FIRST PROMISE.

Is it Gen. 3 : 15?

The prevalent, almost universal opinion is, that the first intimation the Scriptures reveal of the Messiah, or of a Deliverer from the curse following the sin of our first parents, is the assurance of Gen. 3 : 15: "*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.*"

This opinion is entertained as well by *pre* as by *post* millenarians. It is maintained that the latter clause of the verse has direct reference to the triumph over Satan by the redeeming Saviour. So generally entertained and so firmly established is the conviction, that it may seem to some preposterous to call it in question.

A distinguished writer on prophecy (Fairbairn), constructs what he deems to be a strong argument against a law of interpretation adopted by pre-millenarians or literalists, based on the admission by them of a spiritual or allegorical interpretation of this passage; charging them with inconsistency in not adopting here, as elsewhere, a literal, strictly grammatical import. He further declares that those who rest upon a "bald and naked literalism" of the words are not to be reasoned with, but must be held, naturally and morally incompetent to deal with matters of such a kind? "We therefore affirm," he continues, "that the simple literal for prophecy, will not do at the very outset; and to apply it to the very first announcement connected with the hopes of mankind, were only to burlesque the occasion of its deliverance." Thus would he attempt to show the fallacy of those who insist upon a literal interpretation of prophecy, and also hold up to ridicule and contempt the man who should intimate that this passage may, perhaps, admit of other than a spiritual interpretation, and ventures to question its application to the Saviour. Neither the severity of the judgment nor the marked contempt of his verdict, will however deter from the expression of an opinion adverse to his own, or, at least, of the question of its correctness. Wise men, and very competent withal, do sometimes err. The following remarks are made more by way of inquiry and suggestion than positive statement.

The interpretation usually given is, that by the "seed of the serpent," are meant evil ungodly men, and that by the seed of the woman we are to understand the righteous, between whom and the wicked enmity is to exist; and by the bruising of the head of the serpent, is declared the overthrow of Satan by the redemptive scheme of Christ, who, in the accomplishment of the work is to endure suffering, or to receive injury, symbolized by "the bruising of his heel."

A difficulty meets us just here. If by the seed of the serpent, is meant the wicked, we should understand "the seed of the woman," the whole seed, to be the righteous. But, this being obviously contrary to fact, as *all* of woman born, with but one single exception, have been and ever will be corrupt, depraved in very deed, by nature the children of the Evil One, a qualification or limitation must be resorted to, and one which does not strike us as quite legitimate. It must be confined to a certain class of the woman's seed, and that a very small por-

Digitized by Google

tion; the regenerated, the "elect," the "called out" from among the mass. They are the "little flock," very, very few in number, comparatively. And the closing declaration of the verse, with this application of the words, narrows it down to a single individual. If the "seed of the serpent" means the ungodly, without qualification or limitation, bearing a definite character, is it not reasonable to infer that the "seed of the woman," with which it is contrasted, must be a class bearing, as a whole, also, or in its entirety, a definite character? And this is indeed the acknowledged fact. The seed of the woman, all born of Eve, her descendants, are, with the one exception noticed, a depraved race. Hence as the expression "there shall be enmity between thy (the serpent's) seed and her (the woman's) seed," would be unmeaning if both referred to wicked men. The above limitation becomes a matter of necessity, with those who repudiate a literal interpretation of the passage. But is the limitation proper or legitimate? May not the necessity for a qualification of meaning, and a limitation of application, so unusual and so contrary to the grammatical structure of the sentence, prompt the suspicion that the interpretation, requiring such a course, is not the correct one?

In defence of the spiritual or allegorical understanding of the passage, we are reminded that the wicked are called a "generation of vipers;" so indeed were the wicked Pharisees and Saducees designated by the Saviour. Not, however, we presume, because Satan assumed the appearance or possessed the body of a serpent or viper at the temptation, but because of the viper's disposition or nature. Thus David writes of such, "They have sharpened their tongues *like* a serpent. Adder's poison is under their tongues. Their poison is *like* the poison of a serpent." Again, the margins of our reference Bibles, as do most commentators, direct us to such passages as "The children of the Wicked One," "Ye are of your father the devil," "The children of the devil," &c., assuming that these expressions are explanatory of the words "thy seed," in the verse. May it, however, be anything more than an assumption? If these passages directly refer to and are explanatory of "thy seed," in Gen. 3:15, should we not also find somewhere in the Scriptures the righteous designated as "the seed or children of the woman?" Did we find such we might with some more appearance of propriety perhaps, imagine that by the expression in Genesis, were meant the regenerated of God's grace, the chosen few. But we look in vain for such a designation. If the wicked are the "children of the devil," the righteous are the "children of God."

These considerations appear to us to constitute at least a presumptive argument against the common interpretation and application of the words. A recent writer, and he a pre-millenarian, inquires, "Who are the serpent's seed?" And he answers, "Certainly not his natural offspring. It is not revealed, and there is not the least scriptural reason to suppose that he ever had any." This strikes us as a rather more summary than satisfactory manner of disposing of the question. If there were no scriptural *proof* that *this* serpent had offspring, we think there is scriptural reason for the *belief* that it had. "Be fruitful and multiply," was a command given to "every living creature that moveth," and the presumption is that the serpent, this serpent, did obey that command, as we know to our sorrow, the race of serpents has greatly increased and multiplied, and the crushing of the serpent's head is an act of every day's occurrence. But the explicit declaration of the context establishes the fact, that this serpent was to have seed. How otherwise shall we understand the expression, "I will put enmity between *thy* seed and her seed." This is not only a "scriptural reason to suppose," but authority demanding the full conviction that it had "natural offspring;" unless, indeed, we are so entirely to remove it from all possible literalism, as to conclude that the *serpent* was not addressed; and that the noticeable, apparently instinctive enmity between the serpent and the human kind, and the instinctive promptings to crush the serpent's head, both of which have been perpetuated from generation to generation, even, we presume, from the very fall of man, have no connection whatever with the

Digitized by Google

denunciation of the garden; we ask which is the more reasonable presumption?

Fairbairn remarks that "even the language by its poetical covering naturally carries the mind to the higher aspect of things, and lodges a silent protest against the notion of a flat and prosaic literalism." The poetry of the passage may, perhaps, exist but in the imagination of the writer. But he proceeds, "To bruise a serpent's head is a natural expression for putting it to death, making a final end of his power to injure or destroy; but whoever heard of a serpent, in the natural sense, bruising a person's heel?" We might meet his inquiry with another: Wherein consists the propriety of his spiritual application of the words, if the literal understanding involves an absurdity? There must be a correspondence between the words in their natural import and "the higher aspect of things." If the former be absurd, can the application to "the higher aspect," or the use of the figure, so to call it, as an illustration of a spiritual import, be proper? But we meet the presumed, unanswerable and triumphant inquiry by the words of Lange, who calls the word translated "bruise," "that enigmatic word." After stating the meaning given by different scholars and versions, he expresses his judgment in favor of "to lay hold of, to seize, to hit," and proceeds to say, "the serpent who crawls in the dust, if he would destroy man walking in his uprightness, can only seize him by the heel, whereas man can crush his head.... The very moment in which the serpent bites at the heel of the man is the one in which the latter brings down the crushing foot upon the head." Surely there is nothing very absurd in the idea of the "heel being bruised by the serpent," and so absurd as to make "a bald and prosaic literalism" a legitimate subject of ridicule.

Let us now look at the passage in its connection, and we may, possibly, find that the words are not so much a prophecy as a curse, a bare denunciation of evil upon the subjects named. "The Lord said unto *the serpent* (verse 14), because *thou* hast done this, *thou* art *cursed* above all cattle and above every beast of the field. Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." Here is a curse which must be literally interpreted, and which has been literally verified. It was the serpent and not Satan which was to be cursed above all cattle and above all beasts of the field. It was the serpent and not Satan that was to go upon his belly. There is here, beyond question, a degradation imposed upon the serpent. What his appearance and manner of movement were before the fall, we are not informed. But the words of the curse would seem to justify the belief, cherished by the ancient Jews, and by early Christians as well as by many modern commentators, that the serpent before the fall was "not only gentle and innocent, but in form and appearance among the most beautiful of creatures."

The word, serpent, comes, we know, from the Latin, *serpo*, to creep; but the Hebrew term, we are assured, has no relation to form or motion.

Taylor Lewis in a note to his translation of Lange's Commentary, says: "The secondary meaning of the word translated serpent, is a *shining* metal. The name may have been given to the serpent from its glossy, shining appearance; more likely from the bright glistening of the eye. The first impressions of mankind, in regard to the serpent, were of the splendid and terrible kind, beauty and awe."

To this fourteenth verse we must give a literal interpretation; so all understand it. It was a curse upon the *serpent*. Read it now in connection with verse 15, which is, "*And* I will put enmity between *thee* and the woman, and between her seed and *thy* seed; it shall bruise *thy* head and *thou* shalt bruise his heel." This is connected by the copulative with the preceding verse. Does not the grammatical construction require that the "thy seed," "thee," "thou," be referred to the same being, the literal serpent? Then follows the curse upon the woman. "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, . . . in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children," &c., all of which is strictly literal. It would be absurd to attempt to spiritualize it. Then comes the curse upon the man. "In sorrow shalt thou eat of the ground all thy days. In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread,"

Digitized by Google

&c. And here, too, none but a strictly literal sense ("bald and prosaic," it may be styled) can be given to the words.

In connection with this denunciation upon man, is the curse upon the very earth. "Cursed is the earth for thy sake; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth," &c. Who would ever dream of giving to all this any but a strictly literal import? Here in verses 14, 16, 17, 18, and 19, we have words denouncing a curse upon the serpent, the woman, the man and the earth, which cannot by the extremist spiritualist be applied to anything but the literal serpent, woman, man, and earth. And we ask by what authority, by what admitted law of interpretation are we called upon to single out the words of verse 15 from the context, preceding and following, all of which must be strictly literal, and with which verse 15 seems obviously to be a part, closely connected, and declare that they must have a spiritual interpretation, an application totally differing from what is immediately and closely connected with it. We find not the slightest intimation that any being or class of beings is spoken of in one verse which is not referred to in the other. Does there not appear something like an inconsistency in this rendering? Lange himself remarks: "The inconsistency that arises when we would understand verse 14 of the serpent only, and verse 15, on the contrary, of Satan, is very apparent." He evades the charge of inconsistency in his own interpretation by supposing that throughout the passage (verses 14 and 15) an historical foreground is everywhere contrasted with a symbolical background. Accordingly, he says that "both the historical and symbolical go together throughout all the dooms imposed upon the serpent; it is in the third act, however, that the symbolical becomes especially prominent, and casts its light over the whole passage."

But we confess to an obtuseness of perception which forbids our discovering either the prominency of a symbolical background in the fourteenth verse, or the shade of such a background in the simple "prosaic words spoken unto the serpent," "Thou art cursed above all cattle, upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat!" It may be there, but we cannot find it.

We now inquire whether there be not some reason to question the correctness of the general understanding of this passage, and whether we there find the first intimation of a coming Deliverer? And, moreover, whether pre-millenarians do not, by their adoption of such a reference of the passage, give an unwarranted occasion to their opponents to charge them with inconsistency in not strictly adhering to their principle of interpretation, which requires prophecy to be taken in its grammatical sense, or to be literally interpreted where there is no symbol or figure requiring a different rendering?

But it is inquired, does not this literal rendering of the passage greatly debase the subject, and lower the grand purport of the prophecy? Fairbairn says: this "bald and naked literalism is a bitter mockery of the pitiable condition of our first parents!" We claim exemption from the charge. If the words are, indeed, a prophecy of the glorious work of Christ, then does the literal rendering deprive them of their grandeur and sublimity; but if they are not such, then we only debase and lower man's unwarranted interpretation. One who adopts the generally-received understanding of the passage, but who looks forward to the fulfilment of the prophecy only at the pre-millennial coming of the Saviour, says: "Such, in its lofty import and range, is this first and brief exordium of Messianic prophecy, spanning with its radiant covenant the mighty arch of the coming dispensation, until the millennial years, sweet, peaceful, and eternal, shall be attained; and all which God hath spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets since the world began, concerning the restitution of all things, shall be fulfilled."

It would be pleasing to know that, in these words, and thus early after the fall, indeed immediately subsequent to it, an intimation was given to our first parents of a coming Deliverer from the curse they had brought upon themselves and upon their posterity; but our great concern is to know just what Infinite Wisdom has done and said on the subject, and not

Digitized by Google

permit our feelings, merely, to guide us in our interpretation, and to warp our judgment.

We may, again, inquire (and the inquiry gives additional weight to our questioning the propriety of the common interpretation), what could have been the object of an intimation, so obscurely made, of a coming Redeemer? Can we suppose that, with no other revelation than that which the simple statement could suggest, Adam could have comprehended their import? Must not the words have been to him a densely dark enigma? An enigma, in its obscurity and mystery, calculated to increase, rather than relieve, his perplexity. Read the words—placing yourself as much as possible in Adam's position when they were delivered—and find from them alone, if you can, any consolation for the smitten hearts of the disconsolate pair! Moreover, what reason have we for believing that Eve knew that it was Satan, or an evil spirit, who addressed her, and was thus the real tempter? Had she even any intimation of the existence of such a being? When asked of the Lord, "What is this that thou hast done?" she said, "The serpent (not Satan) beguiled me, and I did eat." Does not this seem to imply her ignorance of the fiend who spoke through the serpent?

It is not denied that the Evil One was the veritable tempter. Of this there can be, in our minds, who have the result of the fall before our eyes, and who enjoy the light of subsequent revelation, no possible doubt; but what assurance, or faintest intimation, have we that Eve, as she partook of the fruit, knew that that serpent, then so attractive in his appearance, was instigated by a fallen spirit? May she not have been led to look upon him in his probable superiority to "every beast of the field," as evidence that, if *she* should eat of the tempting fruit, *her* "eyes would be opened, and *she* should be as a god, knowing good and evil," just as the serpent represented himself to be? Such would appear to be the case from what is narrated. "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, *and a tree to be desired to make one wise*, she took of the fruit and did eat." What evidence have we that Eve knew, or had the slightest suspicion, that she was having converse with any being but a veritable serpent? Lange says: "True it is that the serpent appears as the probable author of the temptation. . . . . The serpent presented to Eve the appearance of a trusty domestic animal," excluding thus the idea of an indwelling spirit of evil. That she was infringing a divine injunction, she knew, but at whose instigation she probably did not know. Such knowledge would not have modified her crime; it would not have increased or diminished her guilt.

The author just quoted, in corroboration of his position that the curse of the fifteenth verse has direct reference to Satan, symbolized by the serpent, remarks:

"In respect to this, there is no doubt that in the Holy Scriptures there lies before us a connected line of testimonies, whose object is ever the same demoniac or tempting spirit. A line which, going out from the passage before us, reaches even to the close of the New Testament."

He refers to Rev. 12:3, 9, 13; 20:2, 10; 2 Cor. 11:3; John 8:44; Rom. 16:30. In these mention is made of the dragon, the serpent, the old serpent, &c., &c. But does this fact prove anything in reference to the import of the words, Gen. 3:15? Do they prove that they were anything more than a severe denunciation on the serpent? Do they necessitate the admission that they were a prophecy, to be interpreted spiritually? May not the application of the appellative "serpent," to Satan, be fully warranted, because of the arch-fiend having assumed the appearance, or really, for the time, having possessed the body of a serpent? And may not the dragon, or serpent in its malignant nature and distinctive character, be well used as a designation of one so pre-eminently wicked?

But did not our first parents, soon after the fall, receive some intimations of mercy—some assurance that all was not necessarily lost? Was there no light shed upon their dark, dreary pathway of sin? Read the record of what took place. It would seem immediately after the curse was pronounced, "The Lord God made *coats of skin*, and clothed them."

Digitized by Google

Whence came these skins? Not from animals slain for food, for such were not thus used until Noah came from the ark. (Gen. 5:30, and 9:3.) Were they taken from animals slain for the very purpose of furnishing material for the covering of the guilty ones? This is not to be presumed; especially as we find one of the first incidents mentioned, after the expulsion from Paradise, is Abel's accepted sacrifice of the firstlings of his flock. And, although this is the first notice of sacrifices being offered, the manner in which it is introduced seems to show that it was an established service, and the presumption is, if not the conviction, that before Adam and Eve were driven from the garden, an intimation, and probably a comparatively clear revelation of the work of redemption, was given, of which these sacrifices were the expressive symbol and assurance. And of the skins of the animals thus offered, the Lord furnished covering for the fallen ones. "The Lord made coats of skin, and covered them." These sacrifices surely had some significancy in the eyes of Adam. There was a grand, a glorious fact adumbrated by the bleeding victim, the shedding of whose blood, and that alone, made the sacrifice of Abel acceptable to the Lord. It was offered, we are told, "in faith." In faith of what? Nothing, surely, but the great sacrifice of Calvary.

If Abel, the first-born of Adam, knew something of the wondrous scheme, or at least of the promise of a Deliverer through the shedding of blood, whence did he derive that knowledge? Are we to suppose that it was a revelation directly to him? Was he the first to learn of a coming Saviour? Must he not have received it from his parents? Is it to be presumed that their anguished hearts had not, before this, been comforted by the gracious assurance of a provision of mercy? Were not sacrifices offered up in the very garden where the curse fell upon man for his daring apostasy? How else shall we account for the slaying of those animals whose skins were used for covering?

"Apart from any consideration arising out of the skin-vestures of Adam and his wife, it would seem that if sacrifice was a divine institution, and especially if the rite bore a piacular significance, it would have been at once prescribed to Adam after sin had entered the world, and death by sin, and not have been postponed till his sons had reached manhood."—*Kitto's Cyclopædia.*

May we not in this institution find the first promise of a Redeemer, and not in the curse pronounced against the serpent?

H. A. R.

BRUTE CREATURES IN THE WORLD TO COME.

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain."—Isa. 11:6-9.

When the eye of God gazed upon the newly-created earth, He saw it a glorious perfection. No blight marred the beauty of its verdant mantle. No faded color disfigured its flowery robes. No withering breeze swept away the daisy, the lily, the myrtle, or the rose, or any of the countless flowery gems that blushed in new-born freshness in its vestments and crown. All was perfection and beauty in themselves and in the eye of the glorious Creator.

But when man sinned, God's curse fell upon earth, His beautiful Eden. Its verdure faded; the blushing flower hung its head, and bowed to lay its blighted colors in the dust. The magnificent trees, the planting of the Lord, put on the yellow shroud, preparatory for the tomb. Nature's robes were smitten with decay, and hastened to destruction. The gushing streams and boiling fountains were dried up, and the fruitful field became a barren desert. The gentle winds, the loving breath of heaven, gathered in wrath, and burst in furious storms and fierce tornadoes upon the sin-polluted world.

But when the time of the restitution of all things comes, the blood of the cross will wash

Digitized by Google

out the slimy trail of the Old Serpent, repeal the banning curse, restore the teeming blessing, producing the perfection of beauty. "Then shall the desert blossom as the rose; the parched ground become a pool, and thirsty land springs of water." The thistles, briers, thorns, and all noxious plants which sprung up under the curse, shall wither and forever die under the blood-bought blessing of the slain Lamb; and all shall be clothed, by the merits of the cross, with verdure and floral beauty that will never fade. And the fir-tree, in sublime attitude, lifting its head above the clouds and saluting the throne of God; and the myrtle-tree occupying the place of the thorn and the brier, shall stand for a name, for an everlasting sign to the Lord and to the inhabitants of this renewed earth, that this world shall never again be cursed for the sin of man.

And while such shall be the change produced upon the earth, a change as great and blissful shall be produced upon the brute creation, at the coming of Christ the King, "and the restitution of all things spoken of by the mouth of all the holy prophets, since the world began;" and at this change we now propose to glance.

First, then, it is clearly taught in this beautiful passage, which stands at the head of this article, and other parallel passages, that the nature of the beasts of prey shall be completely changed. Read these passages carefully, and take the language in its literal meaning, and you will undoubtedly come to the conclusion that this is the grand and delightful doctrine which the Spirit of God so earnestly, gloriously, and clearly teaches. Such was the original state of the brute creation, and to this perfect condition they have again to be brought. True, indeed, some have contended that all this is figurative or metaphorical language, and have endeavored to interpret it accordingly, and consequently made it mean something that the Holy Ghost did not teach by it.

It is not figurative language. There is no metaphor in it. Let that glowing description be thoroughly tested by all the laws of figurative language which rhetoric acknowledges, and it will be found that there is no figure nor metaphor here. Some have assumed, contrary to the law of metaphor, that this is metaphorical language. Now, a metaphor ascribes to a creature an action which it has not the power of performing, or to an inanimate object an act which only a living creature can perform. For example, the ship flies. Now the ship is here declared to do a thing it cannot do, namely, *fly*. It has no wings, neither has it life to put wings in motion if it had them, consequently it cannot fly. Only a bird can do that. Or, again, the tempest howls. The tempest cannot howl, for it has no tongue, nor vital organs, nor lungs to produce that sound. It is only the wolf, or dog, or some living creature, having like organs, that can howl. Or, again, the fields smile. It is manifest that the fields cannot change their appearance, either in summer or winter, so as to manifest feelings of pleasure, kindness, love or gladness; consequently they cannot smile. Man, or the intelligent creation alone, can do that.

This is the law of the metaphor, easily understood; and some have asserted that such is the language of the prophet. It is said "the cow and the bear shall feed." Now, can they feed or eat? They manifestly can. They have teeth and jaws, and the power of putting these in motion, so that they can masticate; and they have stomachs to receive food; therefore "the cow and the bear shall feed or eat, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox," is not a metaphor, but a literal declaration.

If it had been said the cow and the bear shall fly, or sing, or laugh, that would manifestly have been a metaphor; but when it is said they shall feed, that is literal language, stating an act which they can perform, and consequently not metaphorical.

Neither is their young ones lying down together, nor the sucking child playing on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child putting his hand on the cockatrice's den, metaphors or tropes, for the reasons or law already stated, for they can do all these things. This, then, is conclusive evidence that this language is not to be understood metaphorically or figuratively, in any sense but literally.

"The lion shall eat straw like the ox," is mani-

Digitized by Google

festly not a metaphor or figure of speech, though some spiritualizers assert it is, and interpret the passage accordingly. It is clearly a simile or comparison, for the likeness of one thing, or act, to another, is evidently affirmed, namely, the lion shall *eat straw like* the ox, or live in the same way and upon the same kind of food upon which he lives. In this comparison it is clearly taught that the lion shall cease to kill his prey and be a carnivorous beast, and shall become, like the ox, a harmless creature, and live on straw, or graze the pasture. This change of nature in the animal, then, is the great truth taught in the passage, and the consequent friendship of the brute creation, and nothing else.

But we are here met with the objection, that the lion cannot live upon straw, unless his gastric juices are all changed, so that they will digest that kind of food. There is no force in the objection, for, if need be, God can and will change them, that the lion may live according to the laws of the new creation, and live upon what it is the pleasure of God should be his food in that new dispensation. He who gave him the present principles of life, can change these and give him what is needed in the state declared by the prophet. This, or any other objection, is of no force against what God has declared He will do.

This glorious prophecy, then, clearly and positively teaches that, when Christ the Almighty Regenerator, comes and renews all things, "the cow and the bear shall feed;" that is, they shall feed in harmony together, and live upon the same food. The natural food of the cow ever has been, and ever shall be, according to the teaching of Scripture, grass or vegetable. The food of the bear, meantime, is flesh. The nature of the bear, then, is to kill the cow and eat her flesh, and, consequently, they will not feed together. The cow, as a matter of self-preservation, will flee from the bear, and the bear will not desire her pasture, nor live upon it, but seek, according to its nature, her flesh. And precisely so with the lion.

But this and other passages of Scripture teach us that when Christ has restituted all things, and the new earth, in all its perfect friendship, comes, the nature of the bear shall be changed. It shall cease to be a beast of prey —a flesh-eater—and become an eater of grass. When this change has been produced, according to the sure word of prophecy, it will feed with the cow, harmless, gentle, and kind; neither hungering for her flesh nor thirsting for her blood, but perfectly satisfied with her vegetable food.

And while they feed in harmony and friendship together, so will their young ones lie down together, and nestle in one affectionate heap, as if they were all of one species and brood; rolling on each other, and fondly licking each other in the intensity of friendship and love. The nature of the lion, too, shall be changed, so that he will as much reject his prey, as he now desires it, for then, like the harmless ox, he will live upon straw. Then the timid lamb shall graze, fearless and delighted, by the side of the noble king of beasts; frolic around him, as around its mother, and lie down in perfect confidence between his yellow paws. It will no longer dread him as an enemy, but forever feel confident of his unchangeable friendship, and the impossibility of his doing it any harm.

The now defenceless and timid hare, that hides away in wild and secret places, will then be divested of all fear, and come and toy with the dog, which it now so much dreads, and run and frolic with him in sportive race.

The lark, the bird of the morning, shall mount up with the eagle, charming the noble bird with her thrilling song, as he soars aloft in his sublime flight, and when he returns, fondly perch on his beak, and look lovingly into his friendly eye.

The timid, harmless dove shall sit with the falcon, on the same bough, as if they were of the same species, and coo with delight in his ear, and feel happy in the confidence of perfect friendship.

The hen and her brood shall nestle with the eagle and her young. The boy weave the flowers in the lion's shaggy mane, garlanding his neck with their blushing beauty. The child play on the hole of the asp, once poisonous, but now harmless as the dove; and put his hand on

Digitized by Google

the cockatrice's den, without injury or danger, and sportively stroke his neck, as the most gentle of creatures, and gather his brood around him as the most lovely toys; for then the fountain of deadly poison in his mouth, shall be dried up, and the disposition to bite and deposit it, forever destroyed; and the long-existing enmity between him and man shall cease, and they shall live forever in loving friendship, pleased and delighted with each other; for in the restituted earth, where Christ, who is love, is King, and all in all, we shall have the declaration of prophecy, which is the sure testimony of Jesus fulfilled, "there shall be nothing to hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain."

"The lion, and the leopard, and the bear
Graze with the fearless flocks; all bask at noon
Together, or all gambol in the shade
Of the same grove, and drink one common stream.
Antipathies are none. No foe to man
Lurks in the serpent now: the mother sees,
And smiles to see, her infant's playful hand
Stretched forth to dally with the crested worm;
To stroke his azure neck, or to receive
The lambent homage of his arrowy tongue."

"The wolf and the lambkin together shall meet,
And the leopard repose with the kid at his feet,
And the child shall disport on the hole of the asp,
And the lion shall lead in his infantile grasp.

"For nought shall destroy in the mount of the Lord,
Nor the beast with his fang, nor mankind with the sword;
For the knowledge of God o'er the earth shall be spread,
As the ocean flood covers its measureless bed."

Now, the brute creation are all howling and groaning in agony together, in consequence of the curse pronounced upon man, and extending in terrible bitterness to them. Oh, what groaning, what howling of suffering and agony are they sending up under the tortures mutually inflicted in the gratification of their savage nature, and the yet more terrible cruelties from the hand of man! For six thousand years they have been suffering and groaning, rending the air with their unbroken wail, sending it up in all its bitterness to the ear of Jehovah, groaning and travailing in pain together, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body and the manifestation of the sons of God.

His ear has heard the painful cry; it has touched and moved His heart, and He has promised deliverance through the Branch of Jesse. When He comes, having righteousness for the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness for the girdle of His reins, the nature of all these ferocious animals shall be changed, and all the different tribes of the brute creation shall be brought into a brotherhood of perfect peace, an Eden of perfect, unchangeable love.

Then shall every cry of misery be hushed, every wail of sorrow cease, and only the voice of gladness, the song of blessedness, ascend from them all; for then shall every pain, and suffering of every name, have passed forever away; and, in that restituted creation, "there shall be nothing to hurt or to destroy in all God's holy mountain." Then "death shall be destroyed; cast into the lake of fire."

J. H.

CHRONOLOGY.

THE chronology of the prophecies is surrounded with great difficulties. An absolute certainty is impossible, owing to some unavoidable defects in our chronological tables. Those two small chasms in the Old Testament, as well as several uncertain dates, demand on the part of every chronologer a proportion of *guess-work*. He may indeed form an opinion, basing it on reasons that render it highly probable; but, after all, it is conjecture. Some have the modesty to admit that their dates are only approximative; others, influenced by their line of comparison, are positive in their assumptions. But generally the more positive the author, the less credence should be given to him; for the simple reason that we can have but little confidence in the judgment of any man who either does not see or else conceals from himself the difficulties of his position. Whilst we cheerfully admit the value of the labors of chronologists, and feel grateful for the light they have given, and that the differences between them (more recently) are but slight, embracing at most a few years more or less, yet we are con-

Digitized by Google

fident in the opinion, that no man living can tell us, from chronology, the exact time of the ending of the six thousandth year, or the precise period of the Second Advent. Approximatively we may know, both by chronology and the signs of the times. By chronology we know, that whilst we may honestly differ respecting the beginning and ending of certain dates, yet, such is their limited duration, that, no matter what plausible or reasonable dates we assign for their beginning, all men of intelligence and judgment admit that the chronological prophecies to be fulfilled, previous to the ushering in of the millennial age, are about fulfilled. In the signs, the fulfilment of the prophecies relating to the Jews, the Papacy, Mohammedanism, the world, the church, &c., we have the more reliable indications respecting the nearness of the end.

The reasons for believing that the exact date of the advent cannot be assigned with any degree of positiveness, are the following. Christ, when directing our attention to that Advent, says that we should be warned of its approach by the signs of its coming, either the immediate or more remote precursors of that coming, viz., the fulfilment of certain predictions given by himself and the prophets. He positively asserts that no man shall know the day or hour of His advent: "but of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." This passage is sadly perverted by many so as to read, that we are to have no knowledge whatever respecting that coming until it transpires. By some, too much stress is laid on the fact that Christ in his humanity knew it not, and hence infer that no information of any kind will be vouchsafed, forgetting that Christ only uttered the words given to Him by the Father, and that the revelation not suitable to be uttered at that period of Christ's work, was afterward, on the reception of Christ into heaven, revealed Him in the Apocalypse. Such forget also, that whilst a positive date was forbidden, yet Christ himself (as well as the prophets), does give us the fulfilment of certain predictions, as sure indications of its near approach. On the other hand, others, seeing a revelation made in the Apocalypse relating to the period of the advent, lay too much stress on the same, seeking after a positive date, forgetting that the data therein given are couched in symbol and surrounded with imagery, which, whilst they may and do afford us a fair proximative idea of its nearness, cannot by any means, as we see by the failure of great, good and wise men, afford us a positive date. Indeed the whole matter can be summed up in a few words: if God designed that a positive date should be fixed, He would not have allowed those two chasms in Hebrew chronology, He would not have permitted the apparent, doubtful discrepancy between St. Paul and the Old Testament, He would have overruled the work of men to perfect our chronological tables, and He would have given us those dates with a degree of plainness to make them incontrovertible to the understanding of the humblest believer. God evidently designed that a degree of *uncertainty* (hence, this uncertainty is made a warning, which will hold good down to the advent itself) should pertain to this subject, in order that the advent might indeed come "as a snare" upon the world, and that those faithful, believing ones (a small flock), who beheld the signs, the steadily fulfilling predictions and the fearfully limited chronology, might *constantly* be in the posture of watching servants. The Holy Spirit, therefore, never says in precise language, that immediately after or immediately before the expiration of such dates, Christ will come. His advent, we know, is connected with them, but precisely how, as to time, is not stated. Those dates are connected either with the overthrow of enemies or the ultimate triumph of the church, and we *infer* from this that at such a period Christ, according to the tenor of Scripture, will come and be present, but for aught we know, that advent may occur a few years earlier to prepare His saints for the scenes and acts awaiting them, or a few years later, preparatory to the manifestation of the sons of God.

As an illustration of this indefiniteness, some have placed the advent immediately after the 1260 years, others after the 1290, and others again after the 1335. We may, indeed, from a preponderance of testimony, form an opinion

Digitized by Google

concerning the period of the advent, and the peculiar events immediately connected therewith, but the former should only be expressed as an opinion, and the reasons leading to its formation should be carefully given. We confess to a feeling of sadness, that many good men have expressed themselves so unguardedly on this point, and thus, after the complete and humiliating failure of their pet schemes, have brought confusion to themselves, have given the enemies of our system a source of constant ridicule, and have produced an uncalled for stumbling-block to searchers after the truth. The Millenarian system demands, agreeably to the teachings of Christ himself, not the looking for the advent at a particular stated time, but a constant looking and praying and watching for that advent.

The preceding remarks may be requisite in order to avoid any misapprehension of what follows, since it is designed to direct attention to a matter of chronology. We confess to a feeling of sadness, when the years 1866 and 1867, and 1868 passed away without bringing something more notable than the diminished temporal power of the Pope. Though we accept it as a token that God will not leave his trusting ones without some sign of his determination to fulfil all that is written. He gave, through human instrumentality, the Papacy a terrible blow, to admonish us that his hand is still upraised for the final culminating act of vengeance. The most reliable of our writers adopted as a favorite date for the beginning of the 1260 years (a time, times and a half, which includes the forty-two months of Revelation), and consequently embracing the duration of the Papacy, the year 606, in which they say the decree of Phocas was given to Boniface III. This date, owing to its plausibility, was adopted by many men who are noted for their piety and learning. The reasons which led them to adopt such a conclusion need not now be reproduced, but to my mind have been so exceedingly satisfactory that I am indisposed to give the date up. No other date than that of the decree of Phocas, which gave the Bishop of Rome the title of Universal Bishop, and no other act than the assumption of that title by Boniface against the predictions and denunciations of Gregory his predecessor, is so well calculated to date the rise of that power when the churches or saints were virtually put into its hands. The question frequently arose in my own mind, are those men correct in fixing the issuing of that decree in the year 606 or 607? Some time ago, in looking over Bower's History of the Popes, my suspicions were aroused that the date given was incorrect, and on examination found them fully confirmed. I will give two statements, drawn from Bower's History. The reader will notice that in any chronological calculation of ours, we take it for granted, that the Holy Spirit will employ, in preference, a corrected chronology. Hence, instead of taking the vulgar era, we add, as all chronologists now admit, four years to form a corrected era. Again, as the decree, universally admitted to have been issued, is now lost, we have no means to ascertain its precise date (another cause for uncertainty). We know, however, that it was obtained the same year in which Boniface was elected, for he only reigned eight months and twenty two days. I take the liberty of adding therefore three months to each table as the shortest time, considering the distance between Rome and Constantinople, in which the decree could have been obtained. The following are the tables:

	YEARS.	MONTHS.	DAYS.
Sabinian elected,	604	8	13
Held the See,	1	5	9
Vacancy,		11	26
Boniface III,	607	1	18
Obtained decree,		3	0
Add corrected era,	4	0	0
	611	4	18
Pelagius II died,	589	1	8
Vacancy,		6	23
Gregory,	13	6	10
Vacancy,		6	1
Sabinian,	1	5	9
Vacancy,		11	26
Boniface III,	606	1	17
Obtained decree,		3	0
Add true date,	4	0	0
	610	4	17

Digitized by Google

Would it not be well for those who are fully posted in those dates, or who have access to the volumes containing them, to give us light on this subject. My library is small, several authors such as Gibbon and others are silent, whilst Bower, considered reliable, gives us in the introduction and text two dates; it would therefore be presumption on my part to assert that one or the other of these dates is the correct one. They only go to prove that the commonly received date for the decree of Phocas, and consequently of the Popish supremacy, is not the true one.

Again, these tables teach us, as well as the continued fulfilment of prophecy, that the fearful predicted end of the Papacy is still in the future, but nigh at hand. If those tables, given by one who had no fulfilment of prophecy in view, proximate to the truth, then the doom of that persecutor is not far distant. For 1260 years + 611 years 4 months 18 days = 1871, 4 months and 18 days, whilst 1260 years + 610 years 4 months 17 days = 1870 years 4 months and 17 days, thus affording us some idea of the duration of the arrogant power. Indeed, is there not something significant in the meeting of the General Council at Rome, December 8th, 1869, and which will remain in session for a long time? It is not only significant on account of its rareness and being usually convoked at a time of great trial, but from the fact that in the representations of the destruction of that power, we are led to believe that some such gathering of its high prelates will be a prelude to its utter overthrow, and that some such gathering of its high ones is necessary to make the catastrophe the more notable and appalling to the witnessing nations. The tables with their result coincide very closely with this meeting of the Œcumenical Council convoked by the pontifical bull.

Those who are well read in the predictions of God's word need not be told what will be the tremendous issues connected with the closing of the 1260 years. To such, any information, although the slightest, respecting its closing, is always welcome. The subject is one dear to them, for it tells them of approaching redemption, a gathered flock, a removed curse, a renovated earth, a reigning King manifested in his glory, as well as the removal of Christ's enemies.

P.S. Since writing the preceding, it occurred to me that it was thought corroborative of the usual date given, that Mahomet arose as a prophet during the same period, so that two great enemies were developed at the same time, one in the eastern and the other in the western portion of the empire. If this fact has any force, allow me to add, that the dates given by the tables correspond more accurately with the time when Mahomet concocted the Koran, and assumed the character of prophet, than those usually presented.

To indicate the uncertainty of dates, no doubt designed by an overruling Providence for the purpose noticed above, by reference to Gibbon's Rome, volume 5, I find that, in a footnote, the years 569, 570, 571, A.D., are given as the time of Mahomet's birth. A difference also is to be made respecting the time of his assuming the prophetic office, and the time he died (or rather his age), for the Arabs reckoned his life by lunar years. The intelligent reader need not be reminded that the discussion of this date respecting the decree of Phocas, is interesting to both Millenarians and Post-Millenarians. Many who oppose our views, still agree with us that the 1260 years added to the time of the decree, will fix both the period of the utter destruction of the Papacy and the ushering in of the millennial age. Thus, for example, Albert Barnes in his Commentary on Revelations, and many others. It is a subject therefore worthy of the attention of every serious student of God's Word.

G. N. H. P.

I SHALL BE SATISFIED.

Not here! not here! where the sparkling waters
Fade into mocking sands as we draw near,
Where in the wilderness each footstep falters—
"I shall be satisfied," but, oh! not here!

Not here, where all the dreams of bliss deceive us,
Where the worn spirit never gains its goal,
When haunted ever by the thoughts that grieve us,
Across us floods of bitter memory roll.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

THE UNSEEN ONE.

When a great Scripture truth sheds its light for the first time upon the understanding, a feeling of joy and wonder is experienced—joy, because that truth is the key which opens an entire cabinet of precious things hitherto hidden from sight; and wonder that, with the Bible in hand, it should not have been seen before. No change has taken place in the book; it contains precisely its former message, without the addition or subtraction of a single word; but to the eye, to the mind, to the *heart*, a wonderful transformation has taken place.

At first those Scriptures, which obviously furnish "proof-texts" of the truth in question, are examined and treasured; but the light thus obtained, speedily expands, like the light of the morning as the sun ascends, until many a hitherto unnoticed allusion, reference, implication, or form of words, confirms the value of the discovery, and gives fresh beauty to the Bible, and fresh strength to the believer. A golden thread is seen running through the entire texture of Scripture, and, to change the figure, the symmetry of revelation stands before the student in all its exquisite completeness.

Hence it is that the return of the Lord, at the close of this dispensation, seen at first in its broad outlines in parable and prophecy, now meets us in doctrine and precept, imparting its wonderful significance to both—even when we are not looking for it. In the ordinary course of reading it flashes upon the mind as the animating thought to which the inspired writers would call attention. That the Redeemer's work *for* men, when He offered Himself "without spot to God," and His work *in* men, when, by His Spirit, He applies the efficacy of His one offering to their consciences and hearts, are among the ever-recurring topics of Scripture, every Christian knows; but every Christian does *not* know that the hope of the Lord's return breathes and throbs, like a thing of holy life, in many a passage where the reader, searching for evidence of this doctrine, would hardly look for it. The indirect proof, the implied evidence that it was constantly in the minds of the sacred penmen, is *very* strong. They felt its vast importance, even when they did not expressly teach it, and gathered strength from it in the midst of their manifold sorrows, even when they did not put it, in so many words, on the parchment. By overlooking this fact, the real force of many of their utterances is lost.

For example, the life-giving hope—the hope of life—inspired by the resurrection of Christ, who is our life, occupies the first section of Peter's first epistle. He utters thanks to the Father for this abundant mercy; refers to the incorruptible inheritance reserved for those who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, and adds: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: *whom having not seen*, ye love; in whom, *though now ye see him not*, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Now, can any thoughtful believer fail to see that this double allusion to the UNSEEN ONE—"whom having not seen," "whom now ye see not"—reveals the dominant thought of the apostle, that the present dispensation is incomplete, and will remain so until the appearing—the apocalypse—of Jesus Christ himself, the object of Christian love and faith? Christian love and faith really receive their highest commendation in these words, reminding us of the beloved Master's statement to Thomas, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." That he walks "by faith, not by sight," is the prominent characteristic of the Christian's pilgrimage. But however blessed

Digitized by Google

this walk of faith may be—and it is unquestionably the most blessed thing on earth at present—the idea of *incompleteness* most certainly belongs to it. It is not the goal of the journey, not the perfection of bliss, not the highest good. It is associated with sore trials and manifold sorrows; tests, discipline, training, nights of weeping and days of heaviness; and all this is fully recognized in Scripture as features of the time of *waiting* for the Lord's return. When His glory shall be revealed, we shall be glad also with exceeding joy. The blessedness of believing in, and loving Him, whom we have not seen, is great, but it is not complete; our joy will not be "full" until we see Him as He is, and that will not be until His promised return in glory.

This is really the doctrine which pervades and gives wonderful meaning to the New Testament. When asked for evidence of our so-called "novel doctrine," that our Lord Himself will return before the golden age of prophecy sheds its lustre upon a world so long kept in gross darkness by the father of lies, we have furnished that evidence copiously from the prophets of both Testaments, and from the words of the Lord Himself, of whom and whose kingdom the prophets of both Testaments speak; but so far is this from either exhausting our testimony, or ending our labor of love, that we find fresh proofs from every reperusal of the wonderful documents that form the Bible, and fresh energy to labor in this holy cause, as we "see the day approaching" which will solve all mysteries, and bring the Church out of the whirlwind of perplexities in which she is now involved.

We have this idea of separation, absence, sorrow, when our Lord said to the disciples, "I go my way to Him that sent me." The thought was distressing! The Messiah, the Lord, the King of Israel, go away! *Away!* Where? Why? Was not the nation of Israel His peculiar inheritance, the seed of Abraham His people, the world His kingdom? No doubt of it. Go away! Sorrow filled their hearts. Surely we—we who love JESUS—understand *something* of this, however little it may be. Love would have its object within sight, near, close at hand. To "go away," therefore, must be in pursuance of some profoundly wise arrangement, which, in its issues, should compensate temporary absence by an enduring and glorious reunion. And that such is the fact is clearly taught; but still the absence was, in itself, a great sorrow.

Leading them out as far as Bethany, our Lord blessed His disciples, promised them the Holy Ghost, and charged them to be His witnesses in Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth. "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight." They stand and gaze heavenward. They begin to realize their mournful condition. The Master they loved has left them! They are poor men in the midst of a world of enemies! But suddenly they are aware that two strangers stand by them, who speak thus: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Clearly, then, they must wait. And *here* was their hope: He is *not* to remain away always! He will come again! They must trust, and work, and wait. They will bear testimony to His Messiahship, death, resurrection, ascension, and promised return. By the help of the Holy Ghost they will preach these grand truths, and be faithful to their high commission, however complicated the trials, and however deep the sorrows that await them. The UNSEEN ONE shall live in their hearts and be the burden of their speech, until this mystery of absence shall be cleared up in the glory of His return. The thing is not as they thought, nor as they could have wished—very far from it; but *He* knows best; and whilst they suffer persecution unrepiningly for His sake, they will comfort one another with the hope of His return.

This was precisely what they did. Peter's speech to his countrymen, on occasion of the healing of the cripple, comprehends all these points: the death, resurrection, ascension, and second coming of His Lord. The restitution predicted by the prophets has not been forgot-

Digitized by Google

ten; you may rely upon its complete accomplishment; and God "will send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you, to carry His glorious purposes into execution." (Acts 3.) In the house of the centurion, also, the same apostle said: "Ye know the word which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the devil; for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of all things which He did, both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem, whom they slew and hanged on a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead. And He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." (Acts 10.) But as Christ will not judge the quick and dead until His appearing and His kingdom (2 Tim. 4 : 1), Peter's thoughts were undoubtedly on the return of His Lord, as he spoke to Cornelius and his friends; as were Paul's when he addressed the Athenians: "God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts 17); as when he reminded the elders of the Ephesian church that he had preached "the kingdom of God" among them (20 : 25); as when he reasoned before Felix, "of judgment to come" (24 : 25); and as when he earnestly "testified the kingdom of God" to his countrymen in Rome (28 : 23).

The same ever-present, hope-sustaining thought pervades the apostolic letters. It is the refuge in every storm that sweeps across the Church; the consolation in every sorrow; the bright star in the darkest night of persecution; the solution of every mystery; and the glorious victory over death itself. There is not a word in these divine epistles either about glorification before resurrection, or the conversion of the world by the Gospel; but oh, how much about the glorious apocalypse of Jesus Christ, whom, having not seen, we love!

CHRIST'S COMING.

PRACTICALLY, the return of our Lord from heaven is rejected by a large majority of professing Christians. They do not deny it outright, but so cold and dead is their faith in it that the subject is well-nigh as seldom named by them as if the Bible made no more mention of it than does the Koran. Some, indeed, there are, who hesitate not to pronounce the doctrine groundless; but while its truth is generally conceded, the event itself is by very many, who profess to accept it, distorted and multiplied into as many distinct comings as there are assumed-to-be righteous souls to be conducted to the fancied sky-kingdom. Christ comes to every believer at death, is a boastful cry, and as it is a fact too prominent to be overlooked, that inspiration couples the advent with resurrection from the dead, they accommodate their theory to circumstances, or circumstances to their theory, by making the resurrection a separation of soul from body. Thus is it that men in their eagerness to "hew out unto themselves cisterns," have forsaken the word of truth, and have sought to turn to naught just so much of the counsel of God. Though prevailing ignorance has caused some well-meaning ones to become ensnared in this particular, the number of such must be comparatively small, for few candid Bible students can have failed to note certain considerations which absolutely forbid such conclusions.

When the attention of even those religionists who profess to hold to the second coming of Christ, as a Scripture doctrine, is directed to the fact, that while the apostles and primitive Christians constantly insisted upon it, the subject has, until within the past few years, long remained almost unmentioned, and is yet unnoticed by a large portion of professing Christians, they urge in extenuation of the negligence, that while it is true that the apostles and early fathers made it a prominent feature in their teachings, they did so expect-

Digitized by Google

ing the event was then nigh; but so many centuries have elapsed without bringing the occurrence, it may be as far in the future beyond us as we are beyond them. This seems very like the servant who is represented as saying, "My lord delayeth his coming;" but we will not judge. Let us notice some facts which indicate that the event is *not* far off.

Previous to the ascension of Jesus, and to their receiving the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, the apostles evidently did expect Christ would then set up His kingdom. On one occasion, in discoursing to them, Jesus "added and spake a parable, . . . because they thought the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said, therefore, a certain nobeman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." (Luke 19 : 11, 12.) Now when that nobleman, the Saviour, was about to leave His disciples to go into that "far country," they inquire of Him (Acts 1 : 6, 7), saying, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." Jesus was ever ready to correct any misapprehension on the part of His followers respecting the time of that event, and knowing their expectations on the subject, He disabused their minds, and gave such a relation of what must first transpire, as to put the idea of a speedy setting up of the kingdom entirely out of the question. True, they failed to comprehend the Master on that as well as on other points; but when they experienced the baptism of the Holy Ghost, they remembered the things which Jesus had spoken unto them, and they understood them. They went out, and, henceforth, zealously preached the fact of His future return from heaven. Why? Because their mission was to proclaim the Gospel glad tidings of life from the dead through Jesus at His coming. Accordingly, we find that the sum of their preaching was "Jesus and the resurrection." They accounted their efforts highly successful when they could induce men to turn "to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to"—expect to go to Christ at death? no, no; but—"wait for His Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." It was not for them to know, respecting the second advent, "the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power," for enough was it for the people of that day to be assured of the fact itself. Further knowledge on the subject was reserved to be unfolded in the period denominated "the time of the end."

We may rest implicit confidence in the truth of inspiration, that "surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants, the prophets." This will be true respecting Christ's coming; and while we do not believe the day or hour will be known, yet the faithful, watching ones will know that it is even at the door. God's manner of communicating truth to His creatures is not always the same, but is different in different ages of the world. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things." (Heb. 1 : 1, 2.) Unto faithful men who are called and qualified by Him to become "ambassadors for Christ," He revealeth His secrets, by moving them to the study, and enabling them, by the enlightening influence of the Spirit, to comprehend the import of the "sure word of prophecy, whereunto," says Peter, "ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts."

A writer has properly remarked: "It is not to be truthfully disputed that, during the last half century, the attention of the Church has been called to the study of the prophetic Scriptures, in a manner never before witnessed, and with an intensity and earnestness of investigation that is irreconcilable with any theory that denies that God is thus moving upon the people, and preparing his chosen ones for some manifestation of His dealings with them, the nature of which can only be known by a careful and prayerful study of His word." Yes, faithful "embassadors of Christ" have, during

Digitized by Google

the past few years, been moved to t' e study of the word of God, and the result is, that not only has much of the truth that became buried beneath human traditions, during the dark night of apostasy, been brought to light, but just in proportion to prayerful investigation does faith in the speedy return of our Lord from heaven increase and abound. More and more closely it is seen, that many of the occurrences which were to closely precede that event are now taking place. "Famines and pestilences" have abounded, and "earthquakes" there are "in divers places." Nation is rising against nation, and "kingdom against kingdom," in wars unceasing, while rumors of wars are carried upon the wings of both wind and lightning, from the centre to the very ends of the earth. "False prophets" in abundance have arisen, and have deceived, and are deceiving many. "Iniquity" abounds to a truly alarming extent, compassing God's people about as with a strong wall, and "the love of many waxes cold." The Gospel of the kingdom is preached "in all the world for a witness unto all nations," and soon shall we see the "Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." Soon he will "send his angels" to "gather together his elect from the four wings, from one end of heaven to the other." Since, then, the burden of apostolic preaching was Jesus, and the resurrection of the saints at his appearing, notwithstanding those events were then so far in future, how much more important, if possible, is it that men should proclaim it, now that the event is thought by so many Bible students to be nigh at hand.

Let not professing Christians deceive themselves in this matter. If men, thinking they have found out a more desirable way to life, attach little importance to the coming of Christ, they will do well to consider whether, at the return of the "nobleman" from the "far country," they may not be reckoned with those from whom shall be taken the little they have. The kingdom of heaven is nigh at hand. When it comes, the great mass of the people will be like the antediluvians, who "were eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away;" for it is declared, "So shall the coming of the Son of Man be."

They only are wise servants who stand "like unto men that wait for their Lord." The day when Jesus in burning glory shall descend with his myriad angel host, will be one of awful terrors to unbelievers, but glorious will it be to them who love His appearing; for He cometh to give eternal life to both waking and sleeping saints. How surpassing sweet is the reflection of the pilgrim when he backward bends his gaze upon a life of struggle, that faith and hope in the object striven for grow brighter and brighter as the sun of life sinks into the west, and already. perhaps, withdraws its animating rays; for well that pilgrim knows he soon will be born into a life whose sun will ever be at meridian brightness.

What, then, though waiting ones become enveloped in fiery trial, or be called upon to go down into the dark valley of the shadow of death? Like the Psalmist of Israel, they need "fear no evil," for over and beyond all, the eye of living faith will view with transporting delight the saints' unfading inheritance. With eager, longing gaze, it will behold the eternal kingdom nigh. How blessed will they be who attain thereto! Free from the fetters of mortality and death, decked with the bloom of immortal youth, secure in unending association with dearly loved and loving ones, what joy will be then? No pain, no sorrow, no dying, no nothing but an eternity of joy unspeakable and full of glory. "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching;" for "the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not."—*Herald of Life.*

THE RESURRECTION OF CHILDREN.

As the Gospel of Jesus Christ is a Gospel addressed to persons of adult age, we could not expect to find in it more than indirect allusions to the destiny of infants; yet the importance of the subject warrants us in believing that it would not be passed by unnoticed in the revelations of the divine will and purpose concerning our race. For the subject *is* important.

Digitized by Google

Doubtless the larger portion of the human race slumber in little graves. And from almost every heart, and hearth, and home, a tender tie stretches away to some flower-strewn mound, where the idols of the heart are mouldering back to dust again. And it is no idle question that we ask, when we inquire, what is to be the destiny of this unnumbered throng; what the end of these ten thousand hopes that have budded for blasting, and blossomed for decay?

It is true that these infant-multitudes have not the faith, and hope, and love that mark the saints, whose resurrection we have seen is so fully assured; but it is also true that they are not sinners, save as they belong to a fallen and ruined race. It is alleged that they have formed and developed no settled character, whether good or evil; and this is true, but how well it would be for older persons if as much could be said for themselves. For, the man who thinks that the character which he has formed entitles him to salvation, knows little of the plague of his own sinful heart, and less of the grace and mercy of Him who came to seek and to save the lost. For, were it not for the cleansing blood of Jesus, the pardoning love of God, and the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost, the *character* which we have formed would only serve to plunge us in condemnation and perdition. And if God can redeem, and cleanse, and bless, and glorify sinners so vile and polluted as we, shall He not also gather the sweet buds and blossoms of humanity, in their infantile innocence and love, and plant them beyond the storms of sin and sorrow, to bloom and brighten in the paradise of God for evermore!

And if Christ was "much displeased" when His ignorant disciples, thinking, with many now, that children were of small account, repelled them from His sacred presence—will He not be still more displeased with those whose theories and notions would forever bar the myriad throngs of little ones for whom He shed His blood, from the glory of His presence in His kingdom.

But weighty as these considerations may seem, we are not left to depend upon them, but are remitted to the Word of God, where we shall find there exists sufficient evidence to assure us of the resurrection of the little ones who slumber in the dust of the earth.

I. The blessing upon Abraham and his seed, which was confirmed by an oath, while it included Christ, did not *exclude* others born of the Abrahamic stock. The seed of the servants of the Lord are often mentioned as subjects of especial blessing; and though unbelief, and persistent rebellion, and disobedience might cut off a child of Abraham from the household and inheritance of the father of the faithful, could sinless infancy and innocence deprive him of this blessed brithright, or prevent him from receiving his fair inheritance? Should a child be cut off and excluded from the heavenly portion because his earthly life is impaired, shortened, and taken away? Surely this cannot be in accordance with the mind and will of that Lord whose tender mercies are over all His works.

II. We are told that when Herod, seeking the life of Christ, slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, "from two years old and under," "then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they are not." (Matt 2 : 17, 18.) But if we turn back to the prophecy here referred to, we shall find some consolation which accompanies it, as follows: "Thus saith the Lord: A voice was heard in Rama; lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord: Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border." (Jer. 31 : 15, 17.)

This prophecy is a prophecy of captivity, but not of captivity among the nations of the earth. Rachel—standing for the mourning mothers of God's people, as Jacob or Israel stands for the whole nation—weeps, not over her captives,

Digitized by Google

but over her *slain*. She refuses to be comforted, not because they are absent or are prisoners, but "because they are not;" because they are dead. But the Lord appears as a comforter. He says, "Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears." He says to the "Rachels" whose little ones, born of such sore travail, and watched with such tender care, and then snatched away before they could know the heart that loved them, or repay the hand that bore them up, He says to *thee*, oh stricken mother, "Thy work shall be rewarded!" Those toils were not in vain. Those pangs and cares were not without reward. Those tears have not fallen to the ground unseen. Those faithful acts of tender love are not forgotten in the grave where your loved one lies. And though the cold, pale lips of death give back no answering kiss, and utter no sign of gratitude, or promise, or blessing; yet He who planted a mother's yearning in thy heart, and formed thee for the sympathies of motherhood and love, hath said, "Thy work shall be rewarded, and they shall come again from the land of the enemy." For when the last enemy, death, shall lose his ancient reign, then He who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," shall bring back "to their own border"—the border of the heavenly paradise, the little ones who have slept so long in death's captivity,—

There my little ones, I know,
Round me shall be clinging;
There the loved of long ago,
With me shall be singing.
Loving eyes shall on me shine,
Hands shall stretch to meet me,
Loving arms shall round me twine,
Loving voices greet me.

III. On more than one occasion Christ presented little children as types and patterns for the imitation of His disciples. These were His words: "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." (Luke 18: 17.) And when the disciples came unto Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven; and whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me; but whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matt. 18: 1–6.) And when they brought their little ones to Him, that He should put His hands upon them and pray, He said to those who repulsed them from His presence, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And He took them up in His arms, and put His hands upon them, and blessed them." (Mark 10: 14–16.)

"Of *such* is the kingdom of God." And with what propriety can this expression be used, if such little children are excluded from the heavenly realms? How is it that little children, in their artlessness, helplessness, and simplicity; in their gentleness and tenderness of spirit, are set forth as patterns to which all the saved *must* be conformed, if they themselves are to be excluded from that heavenly home and that great salvation? "Of such is the kingdom of God;" or, as the Bible Union version renders it, "To such belongs the kingdom of God;" or, as Granville Sharpe translates it, "Unto such belongeth the kingdom of God."

Now the kingdom of God is that home of glory where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, shall be seen But others are to enter on condition that they become as little children; for "to such"—to little children, and those who become like them—"belongeth the kingdom of God." And well it may be so; for the same Jesus who loved, and embraced, and blessed, and died for the little ones, when He was a pilgrim here, shall be there to receive, and love, and bless them evermore. And that person who, putting away high thoughts of pride and self-righteousness, becomes as a little child, and so finds entrance to that heavenly

Digitized by Google

kingdom, will find it an Orphan Asylum on the grandest scale the world has ever seen.

All through this world God has had special charge and care for the little ones. When father and mother have forsaken them, then the Lord has taken them up; and however other angels, charged with other less momentous cares, may have stood within the outer courts of the heavenly palace, "*their* angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

And in that day when He who bade "the fatherless and the widows" to "come and eat and be satisfied," in Israel's ancient feasts (Deut. 14:29); who reserved for "the widow and the fatherless" the forgotten sheaves and the gleanings of the harvest-field (Deut. 23: 19–21); who required each Israelite to profess and declare before the Lord and His altar, from year to year, that he had given "unto the Levite and unto the stranger, to the fatherless and to the widow," their accustomed portion of the harvest-fruits (Deut. 10:18); who "doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and the widow" (Deut. 10:18); whose curse is on him "that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow" (Deut. 27:19); "who preserveth the strangers and relieveth the fatherless and the widow" (Ps. 146:9); who is the "helper of the fatherless," "judging the fatherless and the oppressed" (Ps. 10:14, 18); who is "a father of the fatherless and a judge of the widows, in his holy habitation" (Ps. 68: 5); and before whose face the only religion that is "pure and undefiled," "is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas. 1:27); when He shall be Lord over all the earth, and His will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven, it shall be a blessed time for little children then.

"Of such is the kingdom of God." His kingdom shall be their home. For He who passed through every phase of human life that He might sympathize with every class, who died for all because that all were dead, who gave His life a ransom for all, because all were bound in the common chain of mortality, will not forget the little ones, for whom He ever felt such tender love, nor bar them from the blessings that He purchased with His blood. God grant that we, receiving the kingdom of heaven like little children, may share the glories He prepares for them.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Our Saviour made it a subject of accusation against the men of his generation, that they did not observe the sign of the times. They professed to know what the weather would be, the most uncertain of all natural events, and yet their eyes were closed to those wonderful indications of providence by which God was pointing out to the nations the advent of His Son.

There are among us not a few who think that they see, in the affairs of the world at this time, signs of the second coming of the Son of Man. We do not refer to those who go into minute questions of arithmetic, and undertake to predict the year and the day of His coming, but to that large and growing company of sober-minded, devout Christians, who believe that the Lord has left to his people a perpetual command to watch for His coming, and who think that the events of the present day indicate that He is near at hand, that He may come perhaps during this present generation.

A plain, unlettered reader—and the Gospel is meant for such—can hardly read the New Testament attentively, without getting the impression that Christians are enjoined to live in a state of perpetual looking for some glorious manifestation of the Son of Man. It is to this fact, doubtless, that in every age of the Church this feeling of expectation has showed itself. Nor does such a feeling in the minds of God's people indicate any uncertainty in his gracious purposes. He may have fixed a certain year and day on which our Lord Jesus shall again appear on the earth, and yet have purposely left the signs of the event in that obscure condition that no man can know certainly when it will be, and yet all men should live in a sober expectation of its approach. The state of mind of one who believes that his Lord may at any time return to the world, is not one to unfit a

Digitized by Google

man for present duty. If indeed it were definitely revealed that Christ would reappear on the earth on the 25th of December, 1869, the announcement might doubtless tend to derange the affairs of the world. But that general state of expectation, which is taught and cultivated by most of our Second Adventists, is not of a kind to interfere with the regular course of worldly affairs, while it is eminently adapted to allay the perturbations of the mind, and to check the undue desires for worldly gain or pleasure. The event will indeed come but once, and in its own due time; but the expectation of it, the looking for it, is a perpetual ordinance for every generation, the duty of all time. It is one means by which the Lord keeps His Church in its proper attitude, with its face turned upward.

Besides this general duty of the Church, there are duties to particular individuals, growing out of special indications of Divine providence toward them. God gives us intimations of His will, not only in His Word, but by what happens to us in our private affairs. It is the duty, therefore, of every Christian to look for the signs of his own times, as much as it is the duty of the farmer or the mariner to watch the appearance of the sky. . . .—*S. S. Times.*

Editorial.

A WORD TO OUR READERS.

It is hardly necessary that we should keep our readers reminded of the fact, that we do not hold ourselves responsible for all that appears in the department of "Special Contributions." This was distinctly stated in the earlier history of our Serial. There is much that comes to us for publication, on which we do not presume to pass an opinion, except that we think it fit to be submitted to the attention of our readers for consideration and further inquiry. It is not, therefore, to be concluded, because an article appears in this department of our issues, that we accept and approve it as setting forth precisely the doctrines or interpretations which we hold; but only that it is a fit subject for examination. We do not always appreciate, and certainly cannot agree to stand for, all that our contributors write. Such articles must pass for what they are worth, without respect to any supposed indorsement of ours. We are happy that so much is written with which we can agree, and which we are thankful to be able to lay before the public. We could wish, however, that we had more well-thought and well written articles. We need them, and the Church also. We also need money. Our Serial must be discontinued if not better supported. Let those in arrears remit at once. We hope the bills sent will receive due attention. We are thankful to the prompt, and we admonish the negligent.

AN INSPIRED EPITOME.

Titus 2 : 11–14.

The Doctrine of the Church is a matter of the utmost gravity. No pains should be spared to keep it pure. Unless a traveller is going in the right direction, his exertions, however well-meant, are useless. God recognizes the importance of this matter, and instructs us accordingly. The Apostle charges Timothy to take heed to his doctrine, and to guard the doctrine of others. (1 Tim. 4 : 16, and 1 : 3.) He writes to him respecting things contrary to sound doctrine (Titus 2 : 1), and declares that the time is coming when men will not endure sound doctrine. (2 Tim. 4 : 3.) He also urges Titus to speak the things which become sound doctrine. Jesus condemned the Pharisees because they taught for doctrines the commandments of men. (Matt. 15 : 9.)

The Apostle writing to Christians accustomed to the tenets and theories of Greek schools of human philosophy, and apt to be influenced by their refined sophisms, asks them why it was that they acted inconsistently with their position, being dead to the world. He asks them why they submitted to dogmas regulated by the teachings and injunctions of men; dogmas, at best, liable to misuse, and certain to perish eventually with the sinful culture in which they originated. And he gives a specimen, in the saying: "Touch not, taste not, handle not,"

Digitized by Google

and then further analyzes and exposes this pretended wisdom. (Col. 2:18–23.)

We also read in the New Testament of doctrines of devils, 1 Tim. 4:1; of being carried about with divers and strange doctrines, Heb. 13:9; and we are instructed that he that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. (2 John 9.) Attentive Bible readers will readily call to mind other similar passages.

Doctrine means teaching. In common church usage we apply the term doctrine to the fundamental truths of the Christian religion. The continual inculcation of doctrine, especially in the catechetical form, is an ancient and approved practice; the neglect of which, in more recent times, shows plainly what the prevailing tone of sentiment is.

But what *is* sound doctrine? Schools of theology may, or may not, teach it. They are apt to be tinctured with the spirit of the day. It has several times happened that those were called heretics (because of their dissent from the ruling majority) who, in point of fact, sedulously held and kept the faith in its purity. Public opinion is impatient of contradiction. It has sometimes been wrong.

Sound doctrine is nothing of human invention; but the truth revealed from heaven. And to ascertain what it is, we must examine what the Scripture teaches. Just that, and nothing else.

For reasons growing out of the present condition and constitution of mankind, we have in the Bible no systematic presentation of Divine truth; but the doctrine is, in the happiest manner, interwoven in the sacred text with narrative, petition, prophecy, and exhortation.

Here and there, however, we might, perhaps, expect to find a few sententious and comprehensive summaries. And such is the case. Thus the eleventh of Hebrews is a synopsis of the life and history of the Old Testament saints. A synopsis of the mystery of godliness is found in 1 Tim. 3:16. And in Titus 2:11–13, we have an epitome of Gospel doctrine as applicable to our present condition; whilst verse 14 enlarges the field of view, and carries us into the unnumbered *æons* of the future.

If it be asked, then, what should a faithful Gospel minister, who knows it is his duty and his privilege to please, not men, but Jesus Christ, whose servant he is called to be, teach? the answer is easy; for in this passage from Titus it is divinely settled. Every one of its truths is bitterly unpalatable to the world, and to mere formalist and nominal professors. Let us briefly examine it.

Firstly, then, we learn, that man is a lost sinner, and has a wicked heart. For he needs "salvation;" verse 11. He can do nothing for himself, and is entirely dependent upon divine pity for help. The "grace" of God has brought salvation, by the merit, and through the incarnation and sufferings of Jesus Christ. Consequently human merit, inherent or acquired, is out of the question. All this is involved in the short and weighty phrase, "The grace of God, that bringeth salvation." And as the corruption is universal, so is the offer of grace, for it has "appeared to all men."

This grace likewise instructs us, and regulates our conduct, and our aims. Our conduct for the present age is only temporary, we should not be absorbed in it, or the condition of things connected with it. Though we have an inclination to evil, we have a heavenly principle implanted in us, and divine illumination and assistance; therefore we should avoid whatever is contrary to God's will, though it may cost us self-denial at present. We are to "deny ungodliness," we are to shun "worldly lusts" that abound on every side, and tempt us. We are to exercise a wise sobriety, to "live soberly;" we are to live uprightly, "righteously;" and in the fear of God, "godly."

And this grace regulates our *aims* likewise. It shows the true and grand purpose of life to be, the expectation of and preparedness for the "manifestation of the glory of Jesus Christ," at his return to the earth. And this expectation is defined to be a "happy" one (*μακαριος*). Those who truly cherish it, and live accordingly, carry about within them a well-spring of *joy*. They are lifted, measurably above the world, its temptations and its trials, as being only temporary. They learn to form just estimates; to bear hardships as incidental to the present journey. A happy one, because the object of their desires

Digitized by Google

will not elude their grasp, nor disappoint them. A happy one, because it leads them to seek to qualify themselves for their future position, and above all, to become assimilated in moral character to that exalted personage, in whose society they expect to spend eternity; who is the quintessence of all that is lovely and desirable, great and divine; who is holy, gracious, powerful, wise and good; and from whose immediate hands they expect to receive their unspeakably glorious, and (it may be), kingly and priestly allotted stations.

The Master whom they love and serve is divine; for He is "the great God;" and He is their only help and trust, their "Saviour." It is His love, and His love alone, that bought them free, by the shedding of His blood; by making the greatest possible sacrifice; by pouring out His soul, likewise, unto death; by making his soul an offering for sin;—in a word by giving *himself* for us. The result is, that we are delivered from all irregularity, all "lawlessness," all divergence from the perfect love of God, and the consequences of its infraction by ourselves or others; and that, having been thus "purified," we are set apart, by Jesus Christ, for His own "special" purposes and use. Our present condition and conduct, in abstaining from sin and doing good to our fellow-men, are distinguished from those of others; and our future position will be something unique. We shall be employed for the performance of actions teeming with blessings and joy; being thus, in a measure, assimilated to the divine nature,* whereof, by virtue of our exalted position through the election and merit of Jesus Christ, we have become partakers. This our Lord taught to His apostles, in His last confidential interview, and declared, besides, that there was yet a reserve of goodness, and glory, and wonders, which they were not then in a condition to receive, comprehend, or bear.

All this is contained in this short synopsis of Christian doctrine in the second chapter of Titus;—connected with it, necessitated by it, or growing out of it, and abundantly confirmed by the other Scriptures. And elsewhere it is stated that this glorious destiny is according to the eternal purpose and election of God. See Ephesians 2:10; and the whole of that wonderful epistle, which discloses and unfolds the economy of redemption, and casts the longest sounding-line into the unfathomable profundities of the coming "ages of ages."

The following is a literal translation of this divine epitome of doctrine, contained in Titus 2:11, 14: "The saving grace of God has appeared to all men, teaching us that, refusing and denying ourselves ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, uprightly, and godly, in the present age; earnestly awaiting the blessed hope and manifestation of the glory of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ; who gave himself, on our account, that he might redeem us from all lawlessness" (iniquity), "and purify for himself a special" (extraordinary) "people, zealous for good works."

Now observe the words: "purify for *himself*." Modern Christendom, in its carnal conceit, believes that the Redeemer is for man—made for him exclusively, and to be monopolized by him. But here (and elsewhere) we learn that man is for the Redeemer; his deliverance is but the transparent medium through which shine the divine perfections, and through which they will be displayed, increasingly, forever.

And observe, again, the lesson contained in verse 13, viz.: that the characteristic attitude of a Christian is, an earnest expectation of that happy hope and manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour—the characteristic attitude natural to, and inherent in, every right-minded believer. For the text makes no exceptions. If some, who insist on possessing uncommon clearness of vision, are persistent in asserting that walking men are trees, nothing is effected thereby. Only the imperfection of their sight is manifested. The characteristic attitude remains as stated.

Hence it follows: *that the hope of the Gos-*

* 2 Peter 1:4. Satan, ever intent on concealing or perverting divine truth, and foreseeing this, has travestied this, likewise, in his "Babylonianism," i. e., the spurious religious systems, beginning at Babylon, which he has invented; as we see in the subtle, intellectual Hindoo mythology.

Digitized by Google

pel is, the manifestation of the glory of Jesus, at his second coming. This is settled by divine dictum. The Holy Ghost himself, in His epitome, defines the characteristic attitude of a Christian. So, then, in this beautiful arch of divine truth, if the cross is the foundation, the second coming of Jesus is the *keystone and centre.*

Then lift up your heads, little flock! Ho, ye weary and tempest-tossed! Ye who, waiting for Jesus, are discouraged by the coldness and neglect, and, too often, the sneers and open opposition, of the professing church that is called upon to show forth the death of the Lord *till He come!* Well we know, they push you hard They say you are ☞ "second adventists," and make this (such is the spirit of the time) a keen term of reproach, which, coming from those who love Jesus, or say they do, and who ought to sympathize with you,—which, coming from them, we say, hurts your hearts. Not the appellation, though, for it is your glory (Jer. 9:23, 24); but the spirit that prompts the cry. They say we are "always harping on one string; one-sided; repellant to the world; frightening people; always preaching the second advent." "Second adventists," did they say? Ay, ay, we glory in it. Stand firm, men, and close the ranks! We march to *divine* music, the symphonies of the Holy Ghost; beginning with the great diapason of Golgotha, and about to end with the grand hallelujah chorus, "The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, *and his wife hath made herself ready.*" Such men may well be firm.

Have courage, faint ones! Though ye be but as a flock of kids, and the Syrians fill the country, take in your earthen vessels the hidden light of divine truth, and shout, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

Clad in the perfect mail of the Beautiful House, you are invulnerable. Be of good cheer! Ye are a full match for Apollyon in the valley.

Cease from *man*, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of? *Here* is a refuge. Here is encouragement. Here is consolation. Though you never hear the advent preached from your pulpit, here is a divine teacher, who neglects it not, and with whom you may evermore, and at all times, sweetly commune. And if, while your orthodoxy and "evangelical" views are admitted, you are yet continually reproached with being one-sided, and dwelling too exclusively on the coming of Jesus, to the neglect of the practical doctrines (?) of our most holy faith, here is your unanswerable reply, put into your mouth by God himself. Here he settles what is true Gospel preaching. Here we see that the axis of glory revolves in these two pivots, the cross and the kingdom. The kingdom through the cross, and the cross *for* the kingdom.

There are those that need to revise their theology and their text-books, to make them conform to this Divine Epitome of religious truth, which declares everything in the future and the present to be connected with and to hinge on the now too much despised and neglected second advent.

How mighty and yet how simple is truth! Be in nothing terrified by your opponents. This giant of Gath, with terrific presence, comes out armed *cap-a-pie.* One smooth stone, this text to Titus, lays him low. What if this champion is not yet dead? Is it not that he may strut his day, so that the living God may have more glory? You cannot fight in Saul's armor. Do not essay the ordinary weapons. Go forth with the trust of the young shepherd after God's own heart. Take nothing but the sling and this smooth stone. And the whole assembly of the Church and of the universe shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's! E. E. R.

MORE WORDS TO FAITHFUL WATCHERS.

Ours is a reading age. Never, in all time, has there been such a wonderful testimony borne, in all parts of Christendom, to the near advent of the Lord. Never before have able and pious writers brought to light so many hidden treasures in the word of God. We have diligently perused such as were providentially placed within our reach; we have rejoiced at

Digitized by Google

each new discovery of ancient or buried truths, and have rejoiced as one that findeth great spoil. The intense searching of the prophetic word amid the increasing lukewarmness of the Church, is unprecedented and wonderful. The Gospel (if not yet the Gospel of the kingdom), is preached in all the world, for a witness. The world cries aloud for reform; and the demand for a remodelling of society points at the near coming of one who shall "think to change times and laws" (Dan. 7:25); which prerogative belongs to God alone. The nations are beginning to beat their ploughshares into swords, and their pruning-hooks into spears; to wake up the mighty men; to prepare war; to let the weak say, "I am strong." (Joel 3:10, 9.) The nerves of pulsating lightning by which the fulfilment of Rev. 11:10 (at the literality of which "spiritualizers" were wont to scoff) becomes possible, are extending, in all directions, through the deep profound. Catholic Europe in the South, filling the old Roman earth, and just about to confederate and carry the whore (Rev. 17:3), prepares for the onslaught on Protestantism, and is about to throw new light on verse 6. The four ancient Greek kingdoms, as predicted by Daniel (ch. 8:8, 9, 17, and especially verses 22 and 23), are evidently about to arise out of the ruins of the Turkish empire—Greece and Egypt being already in existence. Late news reports that even Count Bismarck, in a projected new map of Europe, *gives* the Rhenish provinces to France. The ancient Roman empire was bounded by the Rhine and the Danube. Ritualism has been strangely galvanized into life. Democracy is everywhere seething, and nothing will satisfy it but revolution in all things; if it cannot reign, it will divide and dictate. Russia (Gog) is fast and surprisingly gathering to herself the nations spoken of in Ezekiel 38 and 39. Everything indicates despatch, shortness, concentration. Wars last only a few weeks, and can be multiplied.

And what of Lo-Ruhamah and Lo-Ammi? (Hosea 1.) Are there not signs of the coming Hephzi bah? (Is. 62.) Israel, though *not yet* circumcised, is nearing Gilgal. Though yet without a prince, kings do honor his mighty ones; like him who recently left behind him—so they say that know—200 millions of gold. Fertility is returning to Canaan. All that is needed (report says) is colonists and security. The bed of the ancient Kidron is discovered, 90 feet below the rubbish of ages; and the diligent explorers burrowing in Moriah are but anticipating the predicted time when the servants of Zion shall take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof, and when the Lord shall arise, shall appear in His glory, and shall build up Zion. (Ps. 102) Solomon's masons contribute to the garnishing of our metropolitan memorial churches, wherein the great ones of this world are allured to bestow the favor of their presence. The "Universal Israelitish Alliance" is gathering round its standard the orthodox Jews, to whom nine-tenths of that people belong. Such is the antiquarian activity at Jerusalem, that it is as though men were making preliminary search for the tower of Hananeel, and the gate of the corner, in preparation for the going forth of the measuring-line over against it upon the hill Gareb, to compass about to Goath. (Jer. 31.) Not discerning the time, a colony has settled at Jaffa, and failed. The whole East is reviving; the ancient systems of idolatry are tottering—to give place for what? The Orient is coming into the brotherhood of commercial nations, and trade seeks its ancient channels.

The future of Europe is clearly outlined before our eyes, as the prophets of Jehovah have led us to anticipate. The restoration of the Jews to Palestine, in unbelief, under powerful patronage, is close at hand. Any ordinary observer can perceive these coming events. Therefore, the end of the Times of the Gentiles is here, and Jesus will soon return to the earth. Nothing but shutting the eyes, or dreaming, can hinder it from being seen.

According to the best of our approximate insight into chronology—for God, in His wisdom, has not yet suffered us to attain to precision in it, else we could fix the day and hour—the Jubilee of Jubilees is at hand, and the 6000 years are about to expire. The year-day fulfilment of the Revelation seals, trumpets, and

Digitized by Google

vials, seems to be before our eyes—all but that of the last vial.

In view of all this, will you, O ye beloved watching ones! become weary, faint in your minds, and slumber on the enchanted ground? No; a thousand times no! Lest, coming suddenly, the Master find you sleeping. What He says unto all, He says unto you: "*Watch!*"

The vision is for a fixed time; it will surely come; it will not tarry. (Hab. 2:3.) Though it seem to tarry, wait for it. Let us be like men that wait for their Lord! Let us wait for the Son of God from heaven! (1 Thess. 1:10.) Let us be waiting for the coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 1:7.) May our hearts be directed into the patient waiting for Christ. (2 Thess. 3:5.) Say: "I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait; and in *His word* do I hope." (Ps. 130:5.) Remember, those *that wait for the Lord* shall change strength; *they* shall mount up with wings as eagles. (Is. 40:31.)

And, O ye faithful ones! who amid obloquy are giving "the meat in due season," read Luke 12 again, and remember the Master's special encouragement, and the great and special promise He gives you there.

How can we doubt that the next thing may be the call, "Come up hither!" Doubt it not; the *parousia* of Jesus, unless all signs and all prayerful study fail, and all judgment be at fault, is *imminent.*

Though we are not to know, and cannot yet know, the day, we do know that His coming is nigh, even at the doors. Any one of these days or nights His ready ones may vanish from their places. For our part, we confess that we watch the phases of the politics of the day with intense interest, trying to catch, through them, the sound of the footsteps of our glorious KING.

But, beloved, if our *politics* are in heaven, our *life* must also be hid, with Christ, in God, and we must mortify our affections which are upon the earth. Else we may hold the ancient orthodox faith, and we may speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and it will profit us nothing.

When our thoughts would compass the mighty event, it is too wonderful for us. It is high. We cannot attain unto it.

"We shall not all sleep." (1 Cor. 15:51.) "He who is living, and believing in me, shall never die." (John 11:26.) O solemn, humbling, joyful, exultant, rapturous thought! Tomorrow, in my flesh, yet no longer corruptible, I may see God! What, O my soul, doth this imply! O how comforting the thought, that we are compete in Jesus; in Him who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

A recent contributor, who wrote of "The By-ways of the Bible," and whose pieces we read with interest and profit, has pointed out how Elijah's servant went to look from the top of Carmel, and went six times in vain. Now if the expectation in *this* year should prove to be the seventh time, the type would be completed.

But suppose that she who is travailing will not yet bring forth? (Micah 5:3. Rev. 12:5.) Then let us in nothing be terrified by our adversaries, or by the quiet satisfaction, or the "I told you so" of brethren beloved in the Lord, whose eyes (as were once ours) are still holden respecting the pre-millennial advent of our Lord. We are in the way of duty; we are obedient to our Lord's special command. If we are faithful, we shall reap the reward in a closer walk with God; and a greater reward hereafter. Though we should even *fall asleep before* He comes, as did our fathers, we shall share the lot of the apostles, and of him who hoped to attain to "the out-resurrection from amongst the dead." (Phil. 3:11.) It cannot be that the larger company who have fallen asleep in this hope should *lose* thereby, though, indeed, God, in his sovereignty, may do what he will with His own, even if He should say that the last shall be first. We shall not lose by that, even by falling asleep, so long as we are obeying His express commands. So long as we are sober, and watch unto prayer, we need not be distressed by the cry of "fanaticism," or the fact that Satan sows grievous tares among advent wheat likewise. Our duty is to die praying, "Come, Lord Jesus;" and the hope this prayer embodies is, most certainly, the

Digitized by Google

hope of the sleeping saints, and this prayer their prayer; even if, when on pilgrimage, they understood not their true calling as *the sons of God.* "What is the chaff to the wheat?" saith the Lord.

May we and our readers be conformed to the image of the Son of God, and grow in grace and in His knowledge! He that testified these things to John, said: "Surely, I come, quickly." Our hearts reply: "Even so. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" E. E. R.

THE DOCTRINE OF FORGIVENESS.

"Know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins."—Matt. 9 : 6.

The blessed Jesus here makes a most impressive assertion of his pardoning power—one of the very highest and sublimest powers in the universe.

He was at the time in his own city, Capernaum. He had just returned from the opposite side of the lake, whence he had been desired to depart. He had there made a marvellous assault upon the dominion of Satan, and showed his glorious power and willingness to heal and dispossess, but the people preferred their swine and their sensual quiet to his holy rule and saving presence. They besought him to depart out of their coasts; and he accordingly departed. Where the saving Christ is not wanted he will not obtrude and force himself and his mercies. But, he was better known and more highly appreciated in Capernaum. His arrival there was soon noised abroad, and applicants for his friendly and merciful aid were not wanting. Among the rest, a poor paralytic was carried into his presence, and his gracious interference to give relief, solicited. Perceiving the faith in which the application was made, and seeing the distress of the disabled patient, he at once addressed his consolations to him, saying, "Son be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." It was more than was asked; and some said it was blasphemy so to speak; but to him the bonds that hold men's souls, are no stronger than the disabilities which are upon men's bodies; and, realizing the connection of one with the other, he ruptured both classes at once, and sent the sufferer rejoicing to his home, released at once from his palsy and his sins.

Nor is there a more precious part of the Gospel than that, which tells us of a Saviour with power to set free from condemnation. But this is the Gospel we preach. And we need go no further than this text, to assure ourselves forever, "that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." He here claimed this power, and offered, as the incontrovertible proof and demonstration of the truth of his claim, the instantaneous cure of a confirmed paralytic. And just so surely as that palsied man went home in the full possession of his physical powers, even so unmistakeable is the certainty of Christ's power to exempt men from all the pains and penalties of their crimes.

It is also very important for us well to understand this vital part of the Gospel, and to know the precise nature, attributes and means of so great a benefaction to the children of men.

Sin necessarily pre-supposes law; for where there is no law, there is no transgression. Law implies the existence of government, and the exercise of authority. Where there is no government, there can be no law. The government presupposed, is the government of God; and the law implied, is the Law of God. The Author of the universe, is necessarily the *Sovereign* of the universe; and the Maker and the Preserver of man, is by necessity the rightful *Lord* of man. And as we are moral beings, we cannot escape from moral responsibilities, or from obligations to the government of our Creator. The Almighty hath also sufficiently indicated what His law is. It may be learned in part from careful observation of the ordinary course of things, and from those inward instincts and moral judgments which we call conscience. But the Divine Law has been more particularly and specifically articulated in His word, summed up in what we call the Ten Commandments, and resolved into its all-embracing substance in those marvellous words of the Lord Jesus, in which he tells us, that all the law and all the teachings of the Prophets are comprehended in two great precepts: supreme love to God, and love to our fellows the same as to

Digitized by Google

ourselves. We are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, with all our strength. and our neighbors as ourselves. This is God's Law, the standard of our whole duty as moral beings. To this standard we are bound to conform, with all our powers, and in every moment of our existences. We are ever so to love, fear and adore God, as always to render to Him a cheerful, unreserved and perfect obedience, to confide in Him alone, and to trust without wavering in all his word and promises. All the separate precepts which God has given us, enjoining particular duties toward himself or others, are only specifications or detailed applications of these general principles. And any departure or variation, in heart or life from these fundamental and all-embracing principles, is *sin*. These constitute the Law, and sin is the transgression of the Law. Hence, as has been said, "Everything is sin which varies from the Law of God." It may exist in the form of defect, bias, feeling or act; but wherever there is not in the soul, and living in all the heart and life, a constant supreme love to God and charity to all mankind, there is deviation from the Divine standard, and that deviation is *sin*. It does not require that the deficiency should be acted out in the world of external deeds. The Law is spiritual. It looks to the state and condition of the heart, feelings and thoughts. It takes cognizance, not only of what we say and do, or neglect to say and do, but especially of the inward life. In its view, as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. It is one's mental apprehensions, spiritual affections, inward desires, and hidden biases and feelings, that decide whether we are keepers of the Law or not. And wherever there is a condition of the heart, in which it is not completely under the sway of supreme love to God and harmony with His will, there is sin.

Law also involves penalties. A law without penalties ceases to be law, and degenerates into mere counsel or advice, which one may take or set aside with impunity. Where there is government there must be a punishing power, and inflictions to be visited upon the disobedient and unruly. The Law of God, then, to be Law, must embrace penalties to be visited upon those who violate, or fail to keep it. "The wages of sin is death." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." *Death*, then,—death in all the higher and proper enjoyments of our being, is necessarily linked with sin. It may not follow at once and fully upon the commission of crime. There is always an interval between the perpetration of an offence, and the full visitation of the penalty which it incurs. But wherever a sin exists, there is at the same time a prescribed punishment linked to it. Every sinner, therefore, however little he may feel or think of it at the time, has suspended over him the condemnation of the law he has violated, and is only awaiting the period when that sentence shall be executed upon him. And as no mortal man can pretend for one moment to such a state of perfection and innocence as never in his life to have failed to conform to the high and holy standard which God has embodied in His law, so no one can claim to be anything else than a sinner before God, in justice exposed to everlasting punishment. And unless that sentence of the violated law can be in some way satisfied or excinded, "die he, or justice must."

Such, then, is the state in which the Gospel finds every one of us. We are all amenable to a law which we have not fulfilled. Its awful penalties have been incurred by every one of us. Sins of omission if not of commission, and innumerable defects if not active wrongs, stand written against each of us. And against every one of them has gone forth the sentence which binds over to everlasting dying. How, then, shall these bonds be broken, or that sentence be removed? That is the question—and one of the utmost moment. Most people pay but little attention to it; but there is not another which so deeply involves our eternal well-being. And there is only one place in which it is answered. We may interrogate Nature on the subject, but in the unvarying certainty with which all her laws are enforced, with no falterings and no exemptions, she tells us of nothing but inevitable doom. We may search through the annals of this world's wisdom, but will be compelled to come back without a solution of

Digitized by Google

the problem. The earth has been full of sacrifices, experiments, and devices by which to buy exemption, and charm away the sense of God's great, awful and overhanging condemnation; but nowhere has there been found a satisfactory success, or place of repose for the hopes of the guilty and the conscience-smitten children of men. Nor is there such a thing as exemption but in the one only way of forgiveness as presented in the Gospel of Jesus. There is no hope for man, but that which connects with the glorious announcement at the head of this article, "that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins."

But what and how is this thing of the forgiveness of sins?

It is not a mere ignoring of them, or a ceasing to know or regard men as sinners. Sins are *facts*. They are immutable entities, and must be acknowledged and dealt with as positive realities. To refuse to know them, would not dispose of them. We may determine not to know or notice the wrongs and misdoings of a criminal, but that does not alter his crimes or constitute a just disposal of them. They still stand as glaring and as guilty as ever. And the Son of man cannot forgive sins by the mere arbitrary refusal to know of them, or to deal with them. He cannot unknow their reality and their turpitude, and must therefore deal with them according to their real evilness in the universe.

Neither does he undertake so to let down the standard of the Divine claims upon man, or so to reduce and modify the demands of the Law, as to allow to offenders to go free on the basis of such poor reparations or miserable payments as they may be able to make. To relax the Law would be to ungod the universe. Whatever else may occur, the sovereignty and justice of the Divine government must stand unimpeached and unimpeachable. And the Son of man can no more let down the demands of the Law than he can abolish the eternal throne of God. He can no more ignore or refuse to know it, and the reality and justice of its precepts and penalties, than he can ignore the reality and the evil of sin. It must be met and disposed of in a way which will neither compromise its majesty, nor interfere with its unsullied honor.

Neither is it for him to unmake the nature of man, or to sever the continuity of our being, so as to disconnect what is delivered and redeemed, from what was guilty and depraved. A man is a unit through all his existence; and if ever he is forgiven and saved, he must bear with him into heaven the same personal identity which was guilty and condemned. The forgiven man must needs be the same identical being that transgressed, and that was guilty and under sentence of death. New springs of life and character may be opened up in his nature, but the same personal existence must remain in true historical continuity. Whatever newness of life may be superinduced, it must be upon the same plant and stem of individual being which was in sin and condemnation.

How then are all these necessities met so as to beget in the Son of man power on earth to forgive sins? The explanation embraces the very heart and marrow of the Gospel, and is as sublime and astounding in the process as it is glorious and transcendant in its results.

The Son of God becomes the Son of man; He conjoins himself with a literal, real and perfect humanity; He lives himself into a pure, innocent and holy human life, under the Law, and under the various stages of human condition; He fulfills the Law in humanity, meets all its demands as a man, and stands before it accepted and justified forever in his earthly manhood. And in that perfect, approved and meritorious manhood, he volunteered to take upon himself, and to answer in his own person for all the defects and sins of all his fellow men. Though justified himself, he agreed to take the place of the condemned; though in justice exempted from suffering, he consented to suffer all the suffering due unto the sins of that humanity which he had assumed, and in his own person lived it into innocence and holiness. Though by his personal righteousness for ever free from each and every penalty of the Law, he yielded himself up to each and every penalty of that Law, to an extent and degree, as full and complete as if he had himself been the perpetrator of the crimes of all human criminals.

Digitized by Google

The penalty due unto men's sins was death, and he gave himself up to die that death. The penalty due man's sins was exclusion from God, and he gave himself up on the cross to feel in his own soul the amazing terrors of that relinquishment and exclusion from the enjoyment of God. And, in all things, he voluntarily, and of his own free accord, took upon himself to endure, feel and bear in his own lone and holy person, whatsoever was due in justice to the defects and crimes of all sinful humanity. And on the basis of that voluntary, innocent and complete endurance of all that the broken Law of God had against man, he obtained power before God, and before the Law, to offer and bestow free and everlasting remission and forgiveness to each and every sinner of the race who will come to terms with him;—not by ignoring his crimes, but by atoning for them;—not by robbing or degrading the Law of its just honor and immutable claims, but by satisfying them to the full; not by unmaking and recommencing the existence or being of the sinner, but by coming between him and the punishments which he had incurred;—not by abolishing any facts or interests in the universe, but by a complete and glorious mastery of all that relates to them, and a system of gracious conservation which has struck amazement into the hearts of angels, and will be the everlasting wonder of the universe.

By this means the Son of man overcame to be a new head of the race, through whom there was to go forth a renewing and redeeming power unto the fallen children of men, one great part of which is the complete and effective remission of their sins, the dissolution of the penal bonds under which they are held, and the thorough abolition from them of all the punishments of a violated Law.

On what terms, then, is so great a benefaction let forth to the children of men? That there are terms is evident; for not all are indiscriminately participants in the glorious release. The Scriptures speak of many who shall be accounted deserving of sorer punishment under the ministrations of Christ than was meeted without mercy to the despisers of Moses Law. With all that Christ has done, there still are some upon whom the wrath of God abides, who shall never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come. The context gives the indication of what makes the difference. The paralytic's sins were forgiven him, in that there was a devout and reverential confidence in his grace and power attending the application. "Jesus, *seeing their faith*," pronounced the word of absolution. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth in Him* might not perish, but have everlasting life." "He that *believeth on Him* is not condemned; but he that *believeth not* is condemned already, because he hath *not believed* in the name of the only-begotten Son of God." Jno. 3: 16–18. Nay among the last words the Saviour uttered on earth were these: "He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved, and he that *believeth not*, shall be damned."

Here then is the condition upon which sins are forgiven. There must be *faith*. We must believe in the Christ. We must see in Him the glorious Son of man who has obtained the victory for us, and confide in the work He has done, trust to the success with which He has prevailed to meet all the penalties of the Law due to our guilt, and rest all our hope upon His merit and power. And just as we take the simple word which pronounces the work of our deliverance finished in and by Him, that moment, without any works, goodness or doings of ours, we are released—we are free—we are forgiven, and there is "no more condemnation." Being delivered, we are of course to go on cultivating every affection and grace in Christ Jesus; but, so far as the matter of the forgiveness of our sins is concerned, it is done—it is complete—it is as perfect as it ever can be, freely and for nothing, the very instant we have given up to rest in Jesus Christ as our all-sufficient Saviour. It is not a thing of sense to be felt, but a thing of simple faith to be had by our confidence in the truth, that we really and truely have in Christ and His gracious work, whatever is necessary to render us as free from the Law's penalties, as if we had never incurred them.

Oh, it is a blessed truth, that, just as we are,

Digitized by Google

guilty, helpless and undone, we have only to take Christ, to confide in the word which preaches Him to us, to let go all other hopes and helps but Him, and our sins are gone, covered, swallowed up, buried forever in his blood!

Reader, have you learned to comprehend and use this glorious truth? Have you learned to take it in so as to be comforted by it against the ten thousand crying deficiencies which we all have to lament? It is your privilege to enjoy it, and to assure yourself forever against all the terrors of conscience, death and judgment without the necessity of one moment's delay, or one single other act than simply to believe it. O see to it that you take and use the blessed consolation. Be not faithless but believing, and as your faith is, so is it unto you. If you believe and trust fully that Christ has borne your sins, and answered for them, and in that faith cleave unto Him as your Lord, those sins are gone, and you are released from them as surely as you live.

But how is this forgiveness of sins conveyed? We answer, it is carried by the word of Christ. He speaks it. "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." But, how does he speak it? He speaks it in his written word. He speaks it in his sacraments. He speaks it by the lips of his servants. Whatever sets Christ before you as the Saviour of sinners speaks it. The whole Church in its testimony of Jesus speaks it. Placed before you to serve you as Christ's ministers, in his name, and by his authority, we speak it. Even these sentences as they meet your eyes speak it, and so carry and convey it even to you, so that you have only to believe it, to bear away with you from this hour the full and perfect release from the whole penalty of all your offences. We tell you from Christ himself that he has answered for you; that he has settled your account with the judgment; that he hath borne away and consumed the whole penalty of your misdeeds so as never to come against you any more, if you will only believe it, and henceforward cleave to Him as your deliverer. Will you not take it, and comfort yourself with it, and strengthen yourself in the Lord with this glorious assurance of his everlasting truth? You have been baptized; in that Jesus has pledged to you God's forgiveness, just as you believe and take it. You are a member of the Church; in the Church a free full and everlasting forgiveness reigns perpetually, if you will just believe and take it. You have partaken of the holy elements of the sacred supper; in them, Christ's forgiveness was put into your hands and into your lips, if you will just believe and take it. At any rate, you have heard the Gospel preached; and in that preaching the word of forgiveness is ever sounding in your ears, if you will just believe and take it. These are the ways in which it is imparted. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy heart, and in thy mouth; that is, the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Let us ask you, then, dear friend and brother, Do you *believe?* Do you *now* believe? We do not ask you whether you have been forgiven! We only ask you whether you believe. And if you do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, even *yours;* we are here to announce to you, in his name, that *you are forgiven.* Yea, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we declare now, and always, and everywhere, to every one that believeth, that he is forgiven; and if *you* now believe, we do also declare, in the same name and Divine authority, that *you are forgiven*—that now, as these words meet you, at this moment, and without another thing requisite to make the declaration a Divine reality, *you are forgiven if only you believe.* "Be of *good* cheer," then; encourage yourself in the free grace of your Lord. Know the full extent of your privileges. Cleave unto your Saviour. Open your heart wide to Him. Submit yourself in all loving obedience to Him who hath redeemed you by his blood. Try to be like Him in meekness, patience, prayerfulness and charity. Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the dear Saviour. And the God of all grace sanctify you wholly, in body, soul and spirit unto His everlasting glory. Amen.

Digitized by Google

ENOCH'S FAITH.

It is very noticeable how directly, even at that early period of the world, the faith of Enoch centred in the doctrine of the near coming of the Lord to judgment. Indeed, in this respect, he was a consummate Adventist, as all the patriarchs, prophets, and Apostles were. There is but one sentence, of all that he ever preached and testified, that we know to have been uttered by him. That sentence is given us by St. Jude; and it is a sentence about the coming of the Lord with his saints to execute judgment upon the wicked world. That prophecy looked germinantly to the flood, but really, and in its proper sense and fulness, to the coming of the Son of man with power and great glory. Speaking of his case, the distinguished Dr. Candlish of the Presbyterian Church says: "We see, that while the faith of these holy men of old rested on the manifestation of the seed of the woman as engaged in painful conflict, on their behalf, with the seed of the serpent, their expectations reached forward also to his coming in triumph. 'They searched what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.' (1 Pet. 1:11.) It was, therefore, *on the second coming of the Lord in victory, that they set their hearts.* They did not, with the later Jews, overlook his first coming, in suffering and conflict; for they understood well the typical meaning of their sacrifices. But still their eye rested ultimately on something beyond; and it is unquestionable that they, and the prophets after them, delighted to fill their minds with bright and glowing pictures of the advent in glory. *They realized the resurrection state, and the restitution of all things, as virtually near at hand.* And we may be well assured that *this is the real and only secret of such a holy and humble walk with God as Enoch's was; while it is the only effectual antidote to atheistic confidence in nature's permanency, and in the Lord's delay of judgment.*" (Lecs. on Gen. vol. 167.)

And even in some of those more specific aspects of the advent faith, which many are so indisposed to credit, Enoch appears to have been perfectly clear and confident. When the Lord comes to execute judgment upon the ungodly world, Enoch says it is to be "*with* his saints." Now, to come "*with* his saints," there must be some previous *taking* of those saints. There must be a coming *for* the saints, before there can be a coming *with* them. This is plain. Hence there is implied a resurrection and translation, before judgment is visited upon the ungodly world. Enoch not only believed in the revelation of Christ to take vengeance upon the wicked, but he also believed that he and all God's holy ones would already be out of the world, and *with* the Lord, ready to take part in the fearful administration, before the fiery revelation which is to devour the adversaries. He therefore counted on being translated—on being taken out of the world without dying,—and hence sought, by constant watchfulness and prayer, to escape the desolations of the wicked, by a previous bodily transfer to the presence of the Lord.

It has been urged that it is not well for us to dwell much upon these mysterious things; that to give them prominence in our thinking and teaching is deleterious to solid faith and damaging to active and wholesome piety. But the result seems to have been very different in Enoch's case. This was the chief and grand article of his faith, preaching and prophesying. We do not know of a single other word that he ever uttered but this. There is no evidence that he ever preached on any other subject. But we do know that he did believe, teach, and prophesy on this. So far as the record goes, this seems to have been the absorbing and all-comprehending topic of his entire ministry. And yet he is singled out as one of the holiest men that lived before the flood, and all the while "he had this testimony, that *he pleased God.*" Heb. 11:5.

Glorious also was the final issue of his Advent faith. The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that "*Enoch was translated, that he should not see death.*" He never died at all. God took him bodily to heaven, as the type of what he will do to all, of like precious faith, when the appointed time comes.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VII. OCTOBER, 1869. No. 10.

Special Contributions.

THE LAST TRUMPET.

"The mighty sound of this loud trumpet will be heard at once, in the deepest depths of the sea, and in the remotest corners of the earth. Above the stormy winds, the roaring waves, the rumbling volcanoes, and the loudest thunders, the last trumpet, 'the trump of God,' shall sound. And all the dead, whether in the dust of the earth, or in the depths of the ocean, shall hear and come forth."

From the above extract, which I make from a recent number of an excellent paper, it would appear that never has there been heard on earth, so loud a sound as the last trumpet will make. We would be led to suppose that all earthly noises will be low in comparison to it—hushed as it were into stillness by it—that, perhaps, it will be as much louder than the volcanoes, or earthquakes, which threw up the Andean range of mountains, as they are louder than ordinary noises—that it will be in comparison to ordinary sounds as "the shaking leaf, while rattling thunders round us roar." Though that mountain range extends almost from pole to pole, and the igneous action must have seemed as if it would rend the earth, yet we have no reason to believe that it was audible in all parts of the earth; but here will be a sound, it would seem, that will not only be audible everywhere on earth, and sound out to the distant throne of God; but the dead in all parts of the earth and the sea, and in hell, will hear it. That it will awake all of them, and, perhaps, some of them in a fright.

In a somewhat similar strain, an ancient poet has very beautifully and sublimely written:

"Tuba mirum spargens sonum
Per sepulchra regionum,
Coget omnes ante thronum.
Moro stupebit, et natura
Cum resurgit creatura,
Judicanti responsura."

Indeed, it seems to be the idea of many, that that unearthly trumpet, "the trump of God," will be the means of waking the dead of all climes, and of all ages. But, because men have written elegantly, sublimely, and eloquently, are their writings therefore true? May not error be beautifully arrayed? May it not be, that the above extracts are more beautiful than true? Does the word of God inform us that the last trumpet will be heard on earth? That a single mere mortal, dead or alive, will hear it? I admit that much traditional theology will say yes; but traditional theology was not always true in the days of our Saviour, neither is it now. It is a "thus saith the Lord," and not tradition, that makes any theory true. A last, always implies that there are more than one. There cannot be a last, unless there are more than one. To deny this, is to contradict all our ideas of correct language. If then there is a last trumpet, there must also be trumpets which are not the last. How many trumpets are to be sounded? Different passages of the word of God tell us of seven. Rev. 8:2, 6–8, 10, 12; 9:6–13; 11:13; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16. If the last trumpet is not

Digitized by Google

the last of the seven, pray tell us what trumpets are mentioned in the Bible, of which it is the last? Indeed, I read of no unearthly trumpets that are to be blown, except the seven.

There is no passage which would lead us to suppose that there will be any peculiar difference in the trumpets, or that one will sound any louder than the others. As we have said, the word of God tells us of seven, but certainly, it would not lead us to infer that there are any more than seven to be blown; and to say there are less, is to contradict the inspired word. The last trumpet then is the last of the seven. We have no warrant from the word of God to believe the last will be any louder than the other six trumpets. Certainly the plain import of the language would lead us to infer that as was the loudness of the first six, so will be that of the seventh—that if the first six are to be, or have been heard by mere mortals, then the seventh will be; and *vice versa*.

I believe that many expositors are of the opinion that at least a part of the six have sounded. Do any of them believe that any man in the flesh, any mere mortal, has ever heard any one of them? Does any expositor that ever has written, believe that any one of the six, will ever be heard by a mere mortal? If none of the six have been, or will be heard, why should any one believe that the seventh will be an exception? Does the Bible ever speak of it as such? Certainly not.

It is true that Rev. 11:15–18, speaks of the judgment of the dead, of the reward of the prophets and the saints, and of the destruction of those that destroy the earth; and consequently the resurrection must then take place. And Rev. 10:7, informs us that when the seventh angel begins to sound, the mystery of God will be finished. When the mystery of God shall be finished, much that is now dark, will be made plain. But though these things come in connection with the sounding, or at the sounding, or after the sounding of the seventh trumpet, yet they are not a consequence of the sounding, any more than the things which come at the sounding of the other trumpets are consequents. It is God who awakes the dead, and not a mere sound. Whatever may be said of the sounding of the trumpets, or what may be God's object in them, yet it would appear that they are not for the benefit of men in the flesh—not to alarm, instruct nor awake them. Their objects may be one of the mysteries which will be finished. J. B.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TIMES.

Our days resemble the days of Sodom prior to her doom, and so give token of approximating judgment.

In the present lull in the history of the world, and the cessation of startling and exciting events, such as earthquakes, famines, tornados, ominous sights in the heavens, and national commotions, those of little faith among us are almost ready to say: "My Lord delayeth his coming." But our attention has been specially directed to evidence of a different nature, and coming within the immediate sphere of our own observation. This testimony is as striking and conclusive as that of a bolder and more prominent character, and is quite as strong a proof of nearing judgment, if we will only weigh it properly. Notice.

1. The great wickedness of the world, exemplified more particularly in our own country. Christ has said (Matt. 24:37): "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be" in the period of His second coming. He also predicts (Luke 17:28) that there will be a resemblance between the last times and the days of Sodom anterior to her doom.

Previous to the flood, "every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually;" and surely the same may be said of the largest portion of the human race at the present day. How frequently are we startled at the bold, reckless, and even blasphemous expressions used in ordinary conversation! What an obliviousness of self-respect and disregard for the opinions of the more pious and prudent are evinced! The same is also evidence of the exceedingly feeble influence exerted by professing Christians, and is to be accounted for in the want of consistency and faithfulness on the part of church people. We

Digitized by Google

can remember when Christians were regarded with respect and admiration; when the vicious and irreligious were constrained by the power of a holy walk and conversation to preserve at least the semblance of propriety, and were guarded in the manifestation of impiety even to those of kindred tastes and habits. But *now* they seem to "glory in their shame," and worldlings and Christians are so commingled in social life that want of reverence for religion meets with but feeble rebuke. Indeed, it has become difficult to distinguish between them.

"The iniquity of Sodom was pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness in her and her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hands of the poor and needy." Ezekiel 16: 49.

Who can deny the prevalence of these sins, in a very marked manner, in this highly favored land of luxury, extravagance, and self-indulgence? Greater luxury and extravagance may have at times distinguished certain classes and individuals, but when have these sins prevailed so widely, irrespective of position or means? Recklessness in expenditure seems to characterize all classes and conditions, and, as an inevitable consequence, the hands of the poor and the needy are not strengthened.

The *daughters* of Sodom are particularly mentioned, and as the privileges of women in this country are great, we would expect a corresponding exaltation of character and demeanor. Are these expectations realized? Look at the public prints; look around in your own social circle; survey minutely your own locality; and see if there is not cause for deep humiliation and self-condemnation among women.

These less conspicuous things may be overlooked by those whose attention is not particularly directed to them, but the shocking and unprecedented crimes daily perpetrated are patent to all. Many of these crimes *are* unprecedented, and one has constant occasion to wonder at the depravity which has developed such fruits. The demoralizing effects of the war may partially account for this, but only in part, whilst the fact is clear. Nor is this wickedness confined to this country. We need only refer to the daily journals in corroboration of the truth of the assertion that vice and crime are fearfully on the increase.

2. Another evidence of the corrupt state of the times, is the worldliness of professing Christians. The prediction is that many will be "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," having "a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." (2 Tim. 3: 4, 5) Is it harsh or uncharitable to assert that this prophecy is emphatically fulfilled at this time? Whilst we would presume to judge no individual, we yet feel it to be true of the mass of professing Christians; and the difficulty *we* experience in resisting the pernicious influences around us, causes us sadly to feel that these influences are insidiously destroying the piety of very, very many. "Iniquity abounds, and the love of many is waxing cold."

We remember when ministers did not hesitate to give an unqualified and unequivocal expression of opinion in regard to the amusements and pleasures of the world, and when those whose tastes had undergone a transformation by divine grace felt no reluctance in crucifying themselves unto the world, and had no doubts as to the necessity of entire renunciation of what was then considered worldly conformity. But now many ministers think a denunciation of such things gloomy asceticism; such sombre views of life render religion unpopular to the gay and pleasure-seeking generation of the present age; and so their skilful diplomacy recommends the expedient of a compromise,—meet the world half way,—let the Church abandon some of her rigid requirements; widen the "straight and narrow way" into a "broad and easy path;" assure poor sinners that it is *not* "through much tribulation" that they must enter the kingdom,—and they will readily be lured by this captivating speech. All they ask is the world and heaven too! And the result is the introduction of many into the Church who have but the "form of godliness," whose conduct is enfeebling its influence and bringing it into disrepute. Thus a close and harmonious alliance exists between the world and the Church.

Some time ago a large proportion of the

Digitized by Google

members of an orthodox church attended a very questionable place of amusement, and no notice was taken of it by the church, and no reproof came from the pastor. Meeting a member of another denomination, we asked him if he had participated in this amusement, not supposing for an instant that we should receive an affirmative reply. He made a very tart answer, admitted that he had, and justified his conduct. In very great sorrow (for we did not expect it of him), we replied: "Twelve years ago not one professor of religion in this place would have been found there." He answered, in the same spirit, that the progress of enlightened sentiment quite displaced such narrow-minded and contracted views. We spoke of the disreputable character of persons connected with such scenes, and expressed our opinion that it was not right for Christians to patronize iniquity. He thought it very uncharitable thus to judge, and that it was very wrong to indulge in such sweeping condemnations. We merely replied that he would find much stronger and severer ones in the Bible, that we had no ambition to be more charitable than God, and so closed the conversation. He had been most carefully trained, and the influence of a pious mother, both by precept and example, had ever been strenuously exerted against such ungodly pleasures.

A lady not long ago pettishly remarked, "that she wished her minister would not be always preaching about our sinfulness and our duties. That Sunday was a day of rest, and she did not wish to be disturbed and annoyed by such things all the time." Yes, truly, they *have* "itching ears," and if they do not hear the mere empty sentimentality that characterizes much of the preaching of the present day, they are dissatisfied. And, unfortunately, they have too many to minister to these vitiated tastes.

Not long since we heard a clergyman confess, from whom we expected better things, that solid Gospel preaching failed to give satisfaction in his congregation; and he spoke as if he thought a minister could not do otherwise than fall in with the prevailing tastes of the day. Another, with whom we were conversing, and who does not believe in the pre-millennial coming of Christ, and who, of course, finds the present condition of things perplexing and unaccountable, made some very strong statements in reference to the unequalled state of affairs in the Church and the world. He saw only disintegration, crime, chaos in the tendencies of society. And though he could not solve the problem, he drew some dark pictures of the moral state of the Church and the world.

3. The lack of proper family government is another evidence of the indisposition of Christians to perform their duty, and of the degeneracy of the times. It is a painful thing to witness the disobedience and disrespect manifested by children towards their parents, and their unwillingness to render assistance in any way that requires the slightest exertion. They seem to imagine that pleasure and amusement are the only objects in life for which they were created. We knew the time when children had quite a sufficiency of healthful enjoyment, and yet could be useful in proportion to their years. But now, the most tender and loving mother, if one can be called loving, who encourages wilfulness and self-indulgence to the last degree, cannot make the most reasonable or trivial request of her child, without eliciting the peevish and fretful complaints, and so glaring an exhibition of unwillingness to obey, that the humiliating contest is most frequently ended by her own performance of what she had demanded of the child.

And the sweet home life that once existed is but little known now. Parents have lost taste for domestic enjoyments and duties, and children naturally adopt their habits, aggravated by all the license that young persons now enjoy. Almost any spot seems more attractive to them than home. The streets are filled with rude and ungovernable boys, too often the children of professing Christians, whose parents seem only concerned to be rid of the responsibility of their training, and their annoying presence at home. Did our hopes depend on human government, we might well have ominous apprehensions as to the future stability and success of a republic in the hands of the generation now coming forward. Sin and iniquity abound at present, but whosoever shall witness

Digitized by Google

the maturity of the generation to come after, will confess the justice of these forebodings. Premonitions already warn of approaching calamity and ruin.

Girls, unfortunately, seem to be under no greater restraint than boys. They are no longer taught to be useful, modest, "keepers at home." They shrink not from bold publicity and seem to court, rather than shrink from, vulgar notoriety. There are exceptions; but the tendency of the times is as we state. The clamorous demand of women for political rights, is so obviously in opposition to 1 Tim. 2:12, and kindred prohibitions and inculcations, that we wonder how any one with whom the authority of the Bible is paramount, can join with it. Nor is there any hope of making things better from that quarter.

4. Non-endurance of sound doctrine, and prevalence of infidelity and rationalism, presents another mark of our times. "The time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine." "They shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Tim. 4:3, 4.) The evidence afforded by books, papers, etc., is all to the effect that this prediction is having a most striking fulfilment at this day; and daily developments are making the truth of this assertion still more conspicuous. But we wish to speak more particularly of testimony that comes under our own eyes. Not only is there a manifestation of extreme *indifference* on the subject of religion among professing Christians, but there is very little distinct or positive belief of any kind; and in many, many instances downright skepticism on some of the most vital doctrines of Christianity is entertained. We have heard members of orthodox churches express their belief in some kind of purgatorial process after death, by which sin will be effectually eradicated,—thus denying the sufficiency of our Lord's atonement. These same persons have self-complacently deplored the tendency towards Romanism in some other churches than those to which they belonged. We have heard others advocate prayer to the Virgin for intercession on our behalf, and produce the stale, ridiculous argument about the tenderness of a woman's heart in justification; as if a creature could have more feeling than the Author of it, and forgetful of His own declaration in Isaiah 49:16. Still others have confessed to us their entire disbelief in the resurrection of the body, simply because they could not understand how widely disseminated particles could be re-collected and re-formed, even by an omnipotent Being.

Much of the literature that is afloat is characterized by the same skepticism. One would think the curse should have been repealed long ago, by the various restoratives devised by human ingenuity for all the ills of life. Why *should* there be poverty and misfortune, when it is only necessary to be self-reliant, persevering and smart? Why should any one be idle in this land of over-abundance, when employment is just ready to his hands? Why should any one commit the folly of getting sick, when he need only observe the laws of hygiene? And so the fact of our being tainted, fallen beings, and that we must be subject to suffering and misfortune until the Deliverer comes to make all things new, is entirely ignored.

The special unbelief in regard to the premillennial coming of our blessed Lord, among the laity, is not so much to be wondered at, when we see how the doctrine is derided, condemned, or altogether disregarded by ministers. As they ignore the truth, they are "turned unto fables." These fables, for which they have not even weighty human foundation, they persistently preach. We need not wonder that they have dealt so summarily with prophecies incomprehensible to their carnal reason, or seemingly irreconcilable with each other, when we remember how lightly and irreverently they have treated other doctrines as well. They say God cannot expect a rational being to believe what he cannot understand—therefore it means thus. And what substance has their rationalizing left in some of the most essential doctrines of our holy religion? Thus it has gone on, until a very small part of the Bible is really believed.

Verily, if the Son of man should now come, would he find faith on the earth? Let us watch, lest we be found sleeping.

Digitized by Google

WATCHING.

We are on the waters crossing,—
Crossing to a holy shore;
Watching ever for the beacon
Which will guide us safely o'er.
Rocking ever on the billows,—
Billows foaming all our way;
But the darkness gathering round us
Tells the near approach of day.

Oh! the glad, glad blessed meeting,
When His lovéd form draws nigh!
And our Saviour, Christ, appeareth
With His angels in the sky!
He will then have deemed us ready,—
Ready for His crowning love,
And will waft us gently upward
To our happy homes above.

Oh! the joyous, happy greeting
Of the Jew and Gentile band!
For they'll shout a loving welcome
When we reach the holy land!
And they'll flock around us, singing,
Praising God to harps of gold,
As His Son, the mighty Shepherd,
Draws His lambs within the fold!

Oh! the shining of the day-star!
How we long to see it rise!
Praying, waiting, hoping, watching
With our spirit's eager eyes!
Blest Jehovah, hear our prayer!
Lamb of God, we yearn for thee!
Yearn to see Thy kingly beauty,
King of all eternity!

JEDA.

Selections.

CHRIST AND CHRISTENDOM.

THOUGHTFUL men are convinced that great changes are at hand throughout the world. Nor is this conviction felt by religious thinkers only, but by intelligent men of every civilized nation. Philosophers of every *school*, politicians of every party, Christians of every church, *feel* that, ere long, some altogether extraordinary event will arrest and absorb the attention of mankind. The old landmarks, secular and sacred, are passing away with ominous rapidity, as if swept before an irresistible flood. No conservatism, either in Church or State, is strong enough to check the impetuous rush. No appeal to ancestral wisdom has power to stop the speed with which the world is hasting to some marvellous crisis. And no earnest warnings of the possibility of some irremediable disaster have the effect desired by those who utter them.

I. All this is simply matter of fact, irrespective of doctrinal peculiarity.

You may mourn over it, you may rejoice in it, or you may accept it, without either grief or gladness—if that be possible—as one of the inevitable things in the future of humanity, which God *may* either incorporate with his purposes, or bend to his will in the development of his infinite wisdom, but you cannot deny the fact itself. *That* is beyond controversy. Everywhere men are asking, substantially, if not in so many words: "Whither are we drifting? What is coming on the earth? What is to be the end of these things?" Ecclesiastical council, political manifesto, philosophical essay, religious book—it is all the same; for whether joyous anticipation or gloomy foreboding be the outline, unprecedented change, inevitable transition, is unquestionably the text. On that all men are agreed, with a unanimity of sentiment as remarkable as it is new.

But here the unanimity ends, and a perfect Babel of propositions regarding the future stuns the ear. "Lo! here," or, "Lo! there," is the panacea. Let the Church of Rome have her own way; cast aside your unreasoning Protestant prejudices, and fall quietly into her loving motherly arms; do the best you can to facilitate her cherished hope of universality; and she will still the commotions of the times, and bring in the millennial age of peace, and faith, and love. Or, if you demur to this invitation, lend your energies to unfettered Prot-

Digitized by Google

estantism; help to consolidate its divided forces, and to give it unity of thought and action; let its appeals to the "instinct of liberty," and its denunciations of priestcraft be heard through the nations; and no doubt the day will come when, through its agency, "the wilderness and solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." Or, if you think intelligence from the dead more reliable than the voices of prophets and apostles in the Christian's Book, unite yourself with the rapidly swelling ranks of "Spiritualism," and hasten its happy age of abolished creeds, annihilated churches, and universal "free love." Or, if prejudiced against this way of hushing the groans of creation, in consequence of the reports of its doings in the Western world, there are still other candidates for your suffrage, and other prescriptions for the restoration of the patient. To mention but one—which has acceptance in many parts of Europe to an extent that is absolutely incredible to those who are unacquainted with the facts—universal democracy, on the principle of no Church, no Bible, no God. To bring about the promised time of peace, prosperity, and joy to mankind, the golden age of poets and seers, this proposition offers us *naked* ATHEISM!

Let not the reader imagine that we have our eye only on the Red Republicans of France, or the Social Democrats of Germany, and their Italian and English sympathizers, the roughest of the European peoples, who cannot brook the restraints of law, and who have nothing to lose amidst the fury and havoc of revolution. The atheism of such men carries its antidote with it in the immorality, vulgarity, and lawlessness of its advocates. It is from their leaders in the high places of "philosophy" that the danger comes. Men of scientific attainment, more or less profound, are the actual apostles of this Godless gospel. It is no longer the doctrine of inspiration, or the genuineness of this or that Biblical document, which is called in question, but the entire book is pronounced a collection of fables; and that there ever was, or is, such a person as the Christ of God, is openly denied.

"A keen, learned, and relentless criticism," says Mr Dale,* "is sweeping like a destructive tempest over the whole of our sacred books. That 'higher criticism,' the ultimate aim of which is, we are told, to 'discover what actually happened,' and which refuses to be satisfied with what is 'only related to have happened,' is attempting in these last days to reconstruct, out of what it regards as the confused, unsifted, and untrustworthy literature of ages of credulity, passion, and fanaticism, the whole of that wonderful story which has solaced the sufferings, sustained the strength, and inspired the sanctity of so many generations of saints. The Pentateuch and the Acts of the Apostles are alike impeached. The history of the foundation of the Jewish State, and the history of the origin of the Christian Church, are both to be rewritten; but the tragic miracles of the Exodus, and the awful mysteries of Sinai, are to be excluded from the first; and, from the second, the diviner glories which bore witness to the supernatural commission of the Lord Jesus Christ, while he was on earth, and which signalized his return to the throne of the Father.

"To this attempt the 'higher criticism' is impelled, not by its native instincts alone, but by the whole temper and spirit of our times. The supernatural is to be expelled from every province in which its presence has hitherto been recognized. Human thought and volition are but functions of man's organization. The history of nations is the necessary development of laws which may be discovered by human science, and over the action and results of which no will, human or divine, has any control. The material universe, with all its majesty and beauty, bears no witness to the power, and wisdom, and beneficence of the eternal God—'The heavens no longer declare any other glory than that of Hipparchus, of Kepler, and of Newton, and of all those who have contributed to establish their laws.'

* Christ and the Controversies of Christendom. By R. W. Dale, M.A. The Address delivered from the Chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, in May last. London: Hodder & Stoughton.

Digitized by Google

"For centuries there has been no such crisis in the religious thought and life of mankind, as that which is now impending. Hostility to the Christian faith, deeper, sterner, and more systematic than that which terrified our fathers in the most volcanic and tempestuous hours of the French Revolution; theological confusion and uncertainty, far more chaotic than that which followed the revolt of Northern Europe against the infallible Roman Church;—these are the perils which we have to encounter. The time for speaking lightly of these tremendous controversies has long gone by. If only a theory of inspiration were breaking down, if men were discussing nothing more serious than the precise and minute accuracy of the four gospels, if we were threatened with nothing more formidable than the demonstration of the historical untrustworthiness of a few chapters here and there in the Old Testament, we might look on calmly, and wait the issue of the conflict with indifference.

"But it becomes plainer every year that the real questions in debate are far different from these. The storm has moved round the whole horizon; but it is rapidly concentrating its strength and fury above one sacred Head. This, this is the real issue of the fight. Is Christendom to believe in Christ any longer, or no? It is a battle in which everything is to be lost or won. It is not a theory of ecclesiastical polity which is in danger, it is not a creed, it is not the Old Testament or the New, but the claim of Christ himself to be the Son of God and the Saviour of mankind. This is surely enough to stir the Church to vehement enthusiasm, and to inspire it with its old heroic energy. It is a controversy, not for theologians merely, but for every man who has seen the face of Christ, and can bear personal testimony to his power and glory."

II. Existing religious agencies have failed to realize the expectations of the Church.

Whether those expectations are justified by Scripture, or whether the arguments used to create them were sound, is not here in question. As before, we state a broad fact about which there cannot possibly be two opinions, as every one who understands the matter must at once admit. The result of the manifold efforts to evangelize the heathen at home and abroad falls immeasurably below anticipation. At home, with several large ecclesiastical bodies having wealth, influence, learning, and eloquence at command, we cannot overtake the dark masses of ignorance, crime, and misery that crowd and poison our great cities. Scripture Readers, Town Missionaries, Bible Women, Home Missions, Evangelists, and a whole array of voluntary laborers, such as Sunday-school Teachers, Christian Instruction Visitors, and Tract Distributors, supplement the labors of the clergy and pastors of these large churches; and yet hamlet, village, town, city, have to this day dark souls on which the life-giving light of salvation never dawned with transforming power. Abroad, the aggregate result of the labors of all our large missionary societies is, by universal admission, far below what the predictions of platform, pulpit, and press led many to expect. Christian labor,—that is to say, labor for Christ's sake, with the view of promoting his truth, and with the love of souls in the heart of the laborer,—is a sublimely beautiful thing. *Such* labor undertaken at his bidding, and with an intelligent perception of what the Church is to do and to be during the absence of her Head at the Father's right hand, cannot be in vain; but if the Church forgets her witness-bearing mission, and puffs herself up with the idea that *she* is to be a victorious conqueror in the world that rejected and crucified her Lord, the exaggerated self-importance will be rebuked by hosts of enemies springing up to challenge her claims and her Master's too; and the terrible disproportion between her pretensions and her achievements will be followed by a reaction at once humiliating and distressing. Mistaken views of her own position in the divinely arranged system of things are sure to be accompanied or followed by mistaken views, more or less serious, of the revealed character and will of God. If she says, "*I have to bring the world to* CHRIST," she says what neither prophet nor apostle sanctions. If the mistake stopped with herself, the matter would not be so serious; but in the nature of things that could not be;

Digitized by Google

and consequently it has brought serious discredit upon the entire Christian revelation, and upon the claims of our blessed Saviour himself. Men who knew not the Lord for themselves, naturally accepted this declaration of the Church as one of the testing claims of Christianity; but seeing that fact has failed to justify it, they *now* say: "How can we either believe these men or the book whose precepts they profess to obey? If God has commissioned them to convert the world, as they say he has, how is it that the end seems farther off than ever? Surely, if they had divine authority they would have divine help; but the results, according to all accounts, are not very brilliant."

Now it is very easy to call these men "scoffers" and "worldlings,"—very likely many of them have an undoubted right to these titles; but *what right have Christians* to bring discredit upon divine truth by making it responsible for doctrines which it disowns? We *press this question*, as it contains the point at issue. What authority have we—for it really comes to this—to say that the Son of God has transferred his royal rights to our weak hands, to subdue all nations to his will? We first misread the document by which our conduct should be regulated during the Master's absence, and then, seeing that we necessarily fail to do the thing which is *not* expected of us, the world, believing our assurance that it *is* expected, casts discredit upon the entire Word of God. Need we wonder? No; but we *should* mourn!

III. The present state of Christendom is precisely such as might be expected if it were certain that the Christian dispensation would end in an atheistic apostasy.

But that it will so end is certain. There can be no more doubt about it than about the gift of eternal life to him that believes in Jesus. There is no *greater* authority for a sinner's salvation through faith in Christ, or for any other fundamental doctrine of revelation, than there is for the statement that this age will close amidst absolute devil worship and more terrific judgments than have ever hitherto fallen upon our guilty world. The warnings of the prophets of both Testaments, and of the Lord himself, are so numerous and clear that every reader of the Bible should be intimately acquainted with them. The representations given of the close of this dispensation are so minute, startling, and awful, that it is amazing how any Christian *can* seriously believe in the conversion of the world by the agency of the Church, before the return of the Lord Jesus. Deeply stamped upon the book are the appalling features of the coming evil time; and the chief actors in the closing tragedy reach a height of such unprecedented wickedness and blasphemy that, but for the sudden manifestation of the King of kings and Lord of lords, in the great day of his wrath, the triumph of the devil and his agents over this part of creation would be complete. Why, the very language of the panic-stricken foe, when the Lord comes to judgment, *proves*, if we had no other testimony to adduce, that instead of a converted and loyal world, he will find a world of daring rebels. Here it is: "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

IV. Yet the reluctance of Christians generally to embrace the hope which God has provided against the day of storm and tempest is strangely unyielding.

That hope is the return of the Lord Jesus. There is no other. It is God's arrangement, and we would not have it otherwise. It gloriously meets the entire case, solves all difficulties, whether of human or Satanic origin, more than realizes the most ardent hopes of the believer, baffles the schemes of the impious usurper and his armies, and overwhelms them in the fiery flood of vengeance which will utterly destroy them. But the majority of Christians cling to the traditions of a corrupt theology, and look upon those who would bring them back to the pure apostolic fountain as

Digitized by Google

innovators and teachers of novel doctrines. It so happens, however, that the "novelty" rests with them, not with us; and we tell them in all Christian sincerity and affection, that *no* preaching, however fervent, forcible, and clear, that ignores the near approach of the Great Judge, will either arouse the Church to a recognition of her true place, or stem the torrent of evil which is to bear upon its dark bosom the personal Antichrist at whose feet apostate Christendom will fall down and worship. We heard Mr. Dale's discourse, from which an extract has been made, and we felt that it just wanted *one* thing to make it perfect—the doctrine of the second advent of the Lord—to meet the world-storm that is about to burst, and to complete the grand scheme of grace and glory in which the love and wisdom of God are so marvellously unfolded. The assembled representatives of Congregationalism never listened to a discourse more worthy of profound attention, and that is saying *much*; but our gifted, learned, and eloquent brother will pardon us for imploring his attention to the *fact*, that the solution of the controversies of Christendom can be found only in the personal coming of CHRIST!

THE RELIGIOUS DANGER OF THE CONTINENT.

IF the philosophers and the masses are in accord on the Continent, as Mr. Disraeli says they are in England, the priests will one day have to pass through a bad quarter of an hour. One of the most marked signs of the times in Catholic countries, is the extent to which irreligion is becoming a religion, a fanaticism as fierce and as propagandist as that of any creed has ever been. The change is not so perceptible in the Protestant States, where irreligion tends towards indifferentism, or rather to a tone of mind lower even than that, the tone of England, just before Whitfield began his career—a tone, under which the supernatural is neither loved, nor hated, nor feared, nor discussed, but simply ignored as one might suppose it to be among bees. There is plenty of spiritual energy left in Protestant Germany, but in places and among certain classes of society, especially the very respectable, spiritual life seems to have been smitten with paralysis. A friend who has been residing some months in Hesse, says that nothing struck him when fresh from the controversial vivacity of English life—where people now discuss the first cause in drawing-rooms, and argue about the soul over their soup—so much as the apathy of the educated upon the whole subject. They seemed to feel about theology as men without ear feel about music, as something some people were interested in, possibly a something great, possibly a something trivial; but anyhow, a something of which they understood neither the laws, nor the motives, nor the pleasures, nor the pains, nor even the terminology. Scripture to them was as Handel to the deaf, spiritualism as counterpoint, a great theological work as a great oratorio. It was not that they wanted none of it; their indifference went even further than that, till it suggested a natural incapacity. This, however, is not the tone of irreligion in the Catholic countries of the Continent. There the new attitude of Catholicism, its fiercely aggressive, obscurantist, and persecuting tone, has irritated skepticism to passion, to a hatred of Catholicism and its ministers, which, in its ferocity and the concreteness of its manifestations, recalls the days of the first French Revolution.

The laughing skepticism of "polite society" is vanishing away, and in its place we have a propagandist spirit which cannot be content without overt acts. Men write, it is reported, from all parts of France to congratulate M. de Sainte Beuve, most brilliant among essayists, and among the few remaining masters of the lost art of conversation, to congratulate him on maintaining the "sacred cause" of Materialism in the Senate, and one such correspondent signs himself a member "of the grand diocese," thus making of denial not only a creed, but an ecclesiastical organization. Others, said to be thousands in number, bind themselves by oath never to accept the services of the Church in life, in death, or after death; to be married by civil ceremonial, to reject the "last offices"—which in Catholic countries have a social as

Digitized by Google

well as religious importance—and to be buried in unconsecrated ground. Our readers remember the astounding explosion of Materialism among the students from all parts of the world, who assembled at Liege, to advertise their scorn and hatred of the ideas involved in the words "God," and "soul," and "revelation," and "Church," a scorn and hate to which words seemed inadequate to give expression, except in phrases that smelled of blood.

In Belgium, where Ultramontanism has selected its battle-ground, Materialism, utter and propagandist, is the creed of all but the religious, and is accompanied by a desire not merely to quit, but to put down the Church as an evil thing, a foe to human society. The struggle is regarded as one between Civilization and the Syllabus, as a warfare between irreconcilable ideas, in which every weapon is to be welcomed, and quarter is disgraceful. M. de Montalembert, who, if a bigot, is furthest of mankind from a fool, declares publicly his belief that Paganism is winning, that the Continent is on the eve of a burst of irreligion, or hatred to religion such as even the Revolution did not produce, in which all institutions claiming to be divine will be overthrown, and men commence the organization of a new and secularist world. [May not this be the beginning of the fulfilment of the prediction that the ten kings shall hate the apostate Church, eat her flesh and burn her with fire?] So terrified are many thoughtful men at the prospect, that Protestant statesmen like Guizot sway toward Catholicism as the only visible buttress against the wave, and—most significant sign of all—fervent Catholics hesitate to proscribe Renan. In England we think him skeptical, in France, men, orthodox to the back bone, doubt whether his sentimental Unitarianism may not be a defence against infinitely more dangerous and thorough-going assaults. In Austria, we have just seen an explosion of the same spirit, a majority of the Reichsrath exultantly proclaiming that they were all Darwinians, or, as they strangely enough misrepresent that form of speculation, all Materialists, intent, as they openly avow, not on limiting or denying the pretensions of the Church, but on compelling it to give up all effort or claim to interfere in any way whatever in human affairs. So long as this spirit was confined to a select circle, it would have little meaning, except for students of the various forms of spiritual reaction; but it is fast filtering downward. That revolt of the Schoolmasters in Austria, was a revolt of the leaders of the peasantry, and was directed against ideas as well as against priests. It is stated that the Kaiser has admitted to the Vatican, that on religious matters he is not a free agent; that all his soldiers could not enable him to veto the "Godless bills;" and whether this account is correct or not, it is certain that the Austrian masses never got so excited on any secular matter.

We have often reminded our readers of the fact, that a city riot in Belgium always includes an attack on priests or monasteries, and the curious state of affairs in the Department of Charente is a present illustration of the state of feeling. The priests there are being protected by Lancers from the hands of their flocks, who, were the soldiers withdrawn, would tear them in pieces. The prefect's idea is, that the people are passing through one of these paroxysms of credulity which occasionally seize whole nations,—witness the witchcraft mania in so many countries,—that they are deluded with a report that tithes are to be re-established. That may be the fact, probably is; but wild outbursts of that sort always embody some latent sentiment, some deeply-rooted fear. The man who wants to kill his pastor—be it remembered, an indispensable pastor, under the Roman system—because the pastor may be going to tax him, who resists troops in his thirst for his cure's blood, is not in love with the priesthood. During the sixteen years of the Empire, the Ultramontane yoke has been pressed as sharply down as that of every other form of authority; and without disparaging, far less denying the theory that France has in places become more religious, we cannot but doubt, whether there is not also a general hatred of priests, as meddlesome officials of the arbitrary sort, or, as the peasants themselves phrase it, with moustaches sharply drawn up under the nose, as the "black gendarmerie."

Digitized by Google

We confess, that as we read of the spirit which manifests itself in France, Belgium, and Austria, whenever pressure is removed, we scarcely wonder at the vehemence, or the rage, or even the cruelty of the priesthood. They must feel as the priesthood of the third century felt, impelled at once by an imperative duty and an overmastering fear, as if they were once more fighting a Paganism, which, if victorious, would throw them to the lions. If their adversaries win in their present temper, their lives will scarcely be safe; and if their lives are safe, the institutions in which they trust, and to which, be it admitted, the majority of them are sincerely devoted, will be overthrown. It must not be forgotten, that to skeptics in Catholic countries the Church presents itself as a corporation, which must either be let alone, or destroyed, no medium course getting rid of its transcendental claims. In a panic, which is not all, or even principally selfish, the clergy are losing their acuteness, and making blunders which only serve to intensify the hatred of their opponents. They are falling back on their centre for support, till their internal freedom threatens to disappear, and the Pope has the courage to ask the Church to pronounce him infallible, and they are endeavoring to reduce those who adhere to them to an almost military obedience. The attack is so determined, defeat would be so terrible, that they incline to place organization above all things, to expel their own ablest friends, if they show the smallest symptom of independence.

To take a single illustration of their policy. The very best friends the clerical order can have, are the few highly intellectual men who strive to reconcile Rome with the modern world, who maintain that Christianity is compatible with any form of material civilization. To such men, the only men who stand between them and the Materialists, and the only teachers who might in the last resort teach the masses that no dogma can produce hunger, that freedom is inconsistent with belief in the Real Presence, and that the unity of the Church does not increase the conscription, the Ultramontanes, constrained by Rome, impelled by fear for themselves, driven by terror for the future of mankind, offer the Syllabus, under penalty of being considered foes like the Voltarians and Materialists. Naturally, the intellectual Catholics and the laity refuse, being unable to deny what they see—that civilization is good: and the Church is really reduced to what its enemies call it, a corporation hostile to society, and as such, in the judgment of those enemies, to be *ecrasee*, razed off the ground it cumbers. The Church offers, in Catholic Europe, only the alternatives of abject obedience or hostility, and Europe, unable to obey without discretion, accepts the alternative. It is not with pleasure, but with pain, that we record a growing doubt whether M. de Montalembert is not in the right; whether, if Rome does not change her policy, Europe may not see an explosion of irreligion, of fanatical hatred to religion of every kind, false and true alike, which will make the last quarter of this century the darkest through which modern man has passed. We like not Catholicism, with its sacerdotal claims, or Ultramontanism, with its machine-like obedience; but either is better, Hindooism is better, we had almost written Fetichism is better, than the foul creed which papal madness is establishing, the creed which has for solitary profession the dogma, "Sugar is sweet."—*London Spectator.*

HOPE ON, HOPE EVER.

Hope on, though darkest clouds arise,
Though angry billows roar;
Hope on, when lowering are the skies,
When fortune's clouded o'er.

Hope on, when plunged in deepest woe,
When fears your joys molest;
Hope ever, and your heart shall know
A holy, heavenly rest.

Hope on, though friends indifferent seem,
When from loved ones you part;
Hope ever, something bright will gleam
O'er thy lone, sorrowing heart.

Hope still; thy Saviour waits to give
A prize which fadeth never;
Hope on, and thy freed soul shall live
Forever and forever.

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

CHRIST IN US, AND WE IN CHRIST.

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness."—ROMANS 8:10.

WE learn from this text, that the power that enables us to contend successfully in the spiritual warfare to which all the children of God are called, and which also enables us to illustrate in our own walk the excellency of a Christian life, we learn, I say, that this power is divine. It is not simply a supernatural influence exerted upon the individual Christian. We know that the angels are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." But a higher than angelic power is declared to quicken and inspire the class, whose spiritual characteristics and attainments in holiness are delineated in the chapter from whence the above text is drawn. It is uncreated and infallible, and hence incapable of defeat or discouragement; although its manifestation may be delayed, and its operations hindered, by the infirmities that impede the Spirit in his work of emancipation and renovation.

We need not, therefore, wonder that the doctrine of the perseverance of the Saints is clearly asserted, and their final victory expressly declared, when we consider that they are become the temples in which God the Spirit Himself deigns to dwell. The power that called into being all created existences; that holds the planets in their spheres; diffused throughout the entire universe of God, yet concentrating its Almighty energy on the minute atoms, until a desired result is achieved; this Infinite Agent is the interior power that transforms the believer into the image of his God; that imparts and sustains our spiritual life. Except He illumine the soul and exert His energy, the creature must walk in the light of human wisdom, and rely upon an arm of flesh.

Our text does not then assert the action of an exterior influence operating upon the mind of the subject and transforming his character; but advancing beyond the elementary stages of spiritual experience, declares the presence of a power internally revealed, to whose sway all the faculties and capacities are subjected; the absolute master of both heart and life. There is no manifestation of spiritual existence revealed in Scripture, superior to that delineated in the Eighth of Romans, for it exhibits *unity with Christ*. That is to say: He that enabled the ancient saints to work miracles, speak with tongues, write and speak by inspiration, hath transformed, recreated, and doth inhabit those who find their spiritual estate therein represented.

The question now presents itself: Is this blessedness of experience indeed attainable in our day; and, if so, at what cost? To the prior clause of our interrogatory, we may at once return an affirmative reply. "Jesus Christ" is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." So also is our human nature. Its depravity is no less than in the preceding ages, although perchance it may be veiled beneath many specious externals. The Divine Energy overcame in the ancient saints, the same resistance He contends against in us. Why may we not then expect in this Dispensation of the Holy Ghost the same results that were manifest in the Apostolic Church? We may not, indeed, anticipate any display of supernatural power, endowing believers with miraculous gifts, unless the wisdom of God should so appoint, as some suppose the future of the Church will disclose. But we may confidently claim and realize all the fulness of interior life; all the deadness to sin; all the triumphs of faith, that the presence of Christ inwardly revealed, could in any age impart. Let us consider the manner in which we may make this blessed experience our own.

In his Epistle to the Church at Rome, the Apostle first exhibits the workings of the flesh in the natural or unconverted man. He gives to our contemplation, a dark picture of human depravity. He next proves that the *Law*, which contains and makes manifest the mind of God,

Digitized by Google

had not been able to *change* in any degree the flesh, which being essentially corrupt, could render no justifying obedience unto God; and hence that "Jews and Gentiles were all under sin."

Human inability being thus declared and proven, we are prepared to receive the great truth of justification, by the imputed righteousness and atoning blood of another, even of Christ Jesus; by which, of necessity, all "boasting is excluded." God is not "the God of the Jews only," but "also of the Gentiles." In the matter of justification before God, all races and nationalities occupy a common level: salvation is purely of grace, "unto all, and upon all that believe."

Justification by faith being thus proclaimed, *the manner* thereof is next exhibited. The example of Abraham is cited. When, as yet he had no legitimate son, a promise was given that one should be born, in whom "all the nations of the earth should be blessed," and who should be "heir of the world." Had Abraham been in the vigor of manhood, to have "believed God" would have been a light matter. But the promise of God looked to a result that was physically impossible. Without a miraculous interposition of divine power, it could never be fulfilled. To believe God under such circumstances, proved Abraham *to be* a righteous man, for it disclosed the existence of certain valuable characteristics; as reverence, truthfulness, loyalty. "And it was counted unto him for righteousness." For, "against hope," that is, all human expectation, "he believed in hope," that is, anticipated a display of divine power and beneficence in his behalf; "and being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body, now dead, when he was about a hundred years old; neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God."

This account discovers to us the manner in which a sinner becomes justified before God; that is, delivered from the guilt of sin, and the fear of punishment. It is by exercising the faith that shone so brightly in the father of the faithful.

But in order that a true and permanent conversion may be witnessed, must not the sinner's experience progress in the divine order set forth by the Apostle in his letter to the Church? First, the consciousness of inward sin; next the insufficiency of legal righteousness; ere he can truly apprehend his *need* of a Saviour? A consciousness of spiritual death must precede the exercise of faith; and the more sensible we are of our lost estate, and natural incapacity to work righteousness, the more precious shall we esteem Christ; for faith can only exist in the absence of all natural ability. The sinner, therefore, when truly convicted, will believe "the record God hath given of His Son;" namely, that God Himself, in the person of Christ, hath assumed our nature, to the end that in the flesh, and as one of our race, He might fulfil all divine requirements, and put the merit thereof upon us, and also assume our weight *of* guilt, and expiate it with divine blood, thus making atonement. He who believes this, and trusts therein for salvation, is accounted just, even by God Himself.

Now, to believe that mortal man, conceived and born in sin, whose natural mind is "enmity against God," can be justified (that is, esteemed righteous), and brought into harmony with a God of infinite holiness, requires an equal faith with Abraham's; who believed that an event would transpire, which he knew to be physically impossible, simply because God had declared it. Because the sinner "knows that in his flesh dwelleth no good thing; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," and hence, "cannot please God." Yet, notwithstanding, he believes that the merits of Christ cover his demerits, and that the blood of Christ expiates his guilt. By this belief and trust, he is delivered from the guilt of sin, and consequently made righteous in the sight of God, who no longer considers the sinner *as being in the flesh*, but as having *renounced the flesh*, and become a fit subject of the gracious operations of the Divine Spirit which is now imparted. Therefore, as Abraham was justified by an act of faith, so also is the sinner; and as Abraham, from the moment he believed God, doubtless began to experience the *physical*

Digitized by Google

renovation needful to the procreation of a Son, so also doth the *new life* begin in the experience of him who hath exercised the belief and trust of which we have spoken.

We have now reached the point where the Christian warfare may be said to begin; "the flesh will war against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." As in the case of Abraham, the new life must war upon and displace the old inability; two antagonistic and irreconcilable powers contend for the dominion of heart and mind. Therefore, to "continue in sin, that grace may abound," is simply impossible; as it would subvert justifying faith, put a period to the new life, and declare the flesh victorious. For faith in another is preceded by renunciation of self; while to "continue in sin" is the *resumption* of self, and a refusal to serve Christ. Justification by faith is, therefore, but an incipient stage; a preliminary, but not an ultimate; the beginning of spiritual life, which is to progress "unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The seed of God implanted within, must war upon the carnal mind, until every affection is holy; "every thought brought into captivity;" and "the members are become servants to righteousness unto holiness." Thus we perceive that progress is inevitable, and truce impossible, *if the Spirit has in truth* made His abode within. For there are many who feel and partially obey the influences of the Spirit, without ever knowing Him as an indwelling power.

Having thus considered the manner in which a soul is justified, and shown the impossibility of remaining inactive without the loss of justifying faith, let us now inquire how the soul may obtain decisive victory over the spiritual foes that seek supremacy in both mind and heart. The new-born soul is often so tenderly cared for by our Shepherd that, like an infant in the mother's arms, it apprehends nothing of the perils that threaten its future life. Yet are there three mighty enemies, each in himself a host, threatening destruction, and with whom no truce can be made: the world, the flesh, and the devil. The warfare to be waged is purely spiritual. The senses are frequently the avenues by which the enemy gains the citadel of the *heart*. The *mind* is estranged from righteousness through fear of opinion; love of approbation; the principle of self-interest. The cares and necessities of life, the pressure of business, the progress of the age, all combine to oppose the soul, and keep alive that principle of evil called in Scripture "*the flesh*." But it is the office of the Spirit to "crucify the old man, that the body of sin may be destroyed," to make us realize the promise, that "sin shall not have dominion over us." The flesh will, of course, rebel to the uttermost.

What a conflict shall we here behold, when both parties are thoroughly in earnest. We *do* behold it sketched with power in the seventh of Romans. The soul panting for "the glorious liberty of the children of God;" seeking *not* by "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," which always supposes no spiritual life in ourselves, but, ignorant of her own inability, seeks, by virtue of obedience rendered, to overcome the power of sin in herself. In short, seeks, "by the works of the law," freedom from "the law of sin and death" existing in the members, desiring her own triumph in the destruction of her foes, but not conscious that she is "*without strength*."

But two lessons must first be learned ere Christ will grant the victory: first, the spirituality of the law and the exceeding sinfulness of sin thereby; next, the impotency of man to achieve any spiritual conquest in his own might. The seventh of Romans portrays the mighty efforts of the justified soul for "the destruction of the body of sin," acknowledging the holiness of the law, the hatefulness of sin, and at length his native inability to do aught but evil. It is not the language of a Jew, whose obedience lay in the letter and conformity to ordinances. It is not the language of one under condemnation, for he "delights in the law of God after the inward man." It is the utterance of an enlightened soul striving for mastery, in whom the principle of a divine life has been implanted, contending with all the energy of his being against corruption, yet apparently on the eve of sinking in despair.

Digitized by Google

It therefore is not peace with God through the knowledge of the atoning Lamb that is sought, but *victory over the power of sin*, on the part of one who has already received the germ of a new and divine life by faith in Christ. To interpret otherwise would appear to obscure the text, introduce an unpleasant if not unseasonable digression, and destroy the harmony of progression, otherwise so conspicuous in the Apostle's argument, who is leading from the depths of depravity exhibited in the first chapter of his Epistle to the height of Christian excellence portrayed in the eighth. For the seventh of Romans is *addressed* to them who have "become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that they should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should *bring forth fruit unto God*," by victory over *the power* of sin, "serving in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." It is therefore only applicable to the justified soul, and is descriptive of the conflict that awaits him in his progress toward spiritual triumph and emancipation. Ere this blessedness is achieved, he is reduced to despair of self by the knowledge he has gained of the spirituality of the law, the "exceeding sinfulness" of sin, and can only exclaim, "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" (Margin.) Losing thus all faith in his own ability, he is now prepared to receive as the gift of Christ that result which he could never achieve in human might, and will ascribe to HIM all the glory. "I thank God, through Jesus Christ" (I am delivered). The result is attained by faith. As in the former experience he cast himself on Christ for justification from the guilt and condemnation of sin, so now as powerless as before does he cast himself on Christ to be emancipated from its dominion, and made free from "the law of sin which is in his members." And he finds Christ as faithful as at the first, and that the arm of the Lord is not shortened. Christ enters the soul, and from hence "the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift."

This is the class whose experience is delineated in the eighth of Romans, and whose final perseverance is clearly asserted; not the mere subjects of the Spirit's influences, but the living temples in whom Jesus dwells. "*I* in them, and *Thou* in me." This is "the body," of which Christ is the head; the transgressions of which body were visited upon the guiltless Head, the righteousness of which Head is now imputed unto the body, and *inwrought* by the operations of the quickening Spirit, "that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled *in us*, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." For "ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Sins of ignorance and human infirmity will afflict until the very termination of our pilgrimage; but a perfect heart and the indwelling Spirit, God hath promised. And the same faith that now enables the believer to overcome sin in himself, will no doubt in the future, when the wisdom of God shall appoint, restore again to the Church the gifts of miracles, tongues, &c. But if the Church believe the power of indwelling sin too strong to be overcome by the Spirit of God, how shall she ever expect to accomplish *other* supernatural results by the same Spirit? What may not Christ accomplish through the agency of even one in whom He dwells, and of whom He is the absolute master, because in him "the body of sin has been destroyed?" How gloriously is this question answered in the life of the Apostle Paul! May it not be truly said that Christ can do no mighty work *among us*, because of our unbelief? He who would seek and attain the blessedness of which we have spoken, must, as a preliminary, consecrate his entire being unto God, believing that God hears and accepts, seeking to render heartfelt obedience while claiming confidently the fulfilment of His promises who hath said:

"I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." W. R. P.

SPEAK truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VII. NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER, 1869. Nos. 11 & 12.

Special Contributions.

"THE DAYS WE LIVE IN."

On all hands it is acknowledged that these are wondrous days. Statesmen, philosophers, poets, divines, and thoughtful men in all ranks of life, admit and confess that this age has characteristics, marked and almost unprecedented in their character. As "coming events cast their shadows before," so the strangely ominous features of these days would seem to indicate that we are probably on the eve of some vast change.

1. "These days" are distinguished pre-eminently for excitement, activity, and genius. The human mind was never so active. The world has never moved with such rapid strides as it is moving now. "Progress" is the universal watchword. Steam and electricity have almost annihilated time and distance. The completion of the Pacific Railroad, and the Suez Canal, with other gigantic undertakings yet to follow, will, ere long, tend to make the world one vast city. The laying of a new cable "from Europe to America," awakens no more interest now, in general, than the latest murder or railroad accident. Already additional "cables" across the Atlantic are talked of. A new railroad, to connect Europe with India, it is said, is seriously contemplated; while California, not to be outdone by the Old World, has established the "Aerial Navigation Company," and expects to render the Pacific Railroad useless. Surely, as Carlyle said, "the age of shams is past."

2. The rapid increase of religious knowledge and activity, is one of the characteristics of these days. The prophet's words are fulfilled before our eyes: "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." At the French Exposition, held at Paris two years ago, there were specimens of the Bible in more than two hundred languages. In the last sixty years wonderful progress has been made in preaching the Gospel to all nations. Over a million and a half of souls have been hopefully converted in India, Burmah, China, Turkey, the Islands of the Pacific, and elsewhere, through the labors of Christian missionaries. There is scarcely a nation unreached by the messengers of the Gospel of peace. Nor is the activity at home less noticeable. The growing union among the evangelical Churches; "the running to and fro" in Christian conventions, "Sunday-school Conventions," and kindred agencies, as well as the efforts of earnest laymen, both in Europe and our own country, to reach the masses with the Gospel, are among the most noted signs of these days.

3. In the political world we find our times distinguished for great political changes and revolutions. The great upheavings in Europe in 1848, are not forgotten. Moreover, the present generation has witnessed the opening of China and Japan to commerce and the Gospel; the unification and freedom of Italy; the consolidation of Germany; the establishment of permanent reforms in Austria; the liberation of the serfs in Russia; and, more recently, an overturning in Spain, of which the end is not yet; while last, but not least, the recent revolution in the character of our own domestic affairs. And, at the present moment, there is a

Digitized by Google

state of unrest and turmoil among the nations, ominous of still greater changes in the future. A prominent *French* journal recently remarked that Turkey alone was not "the sick man" now, *but all Europe.* "From the shores of Portugal to the palace of Czars," agitation, unrest, dissatisfaction, and change, universally prevail.

4. It is, moreover, a noted sign of these days, that, notwithstanding great and unprecedented religious activity, formalism, skepticism, false religion, irreligion, and immorality fearfully abound, and are rapidly increasing. It would seem as though both the good and the evil were culminating. Whether the world is growing better or worse, is an open question. Of one thing the writer is fully satisfied, that our public speakers and leading men greatly err when they give us rose-colored pictures of the age, and tell us that time's great conflicts are nearly over. It is a great mistake to confound *progress* with piety. There is no true religion necessarily in railroads, telegraphs, or the inventions of genius for lightening labor, but rather the contrary, even the worship of mammon. Indeed, there is reason to believe that they only intensify human selfishness. Let any earnest Christian ask himself, as he looks over the religious world, "Is there a growing holiness in all our churches? Are Christians becoming less and less covetous, selfish, worldly? Is the line of separation between the Church and the world becoming more and more marked?" We fear the honest answer will be, "No!" There never was a time when there was so much *profession;* and, yet, at the same time, when the standard of individual piety was so low. Amusements, customs, fashions, and beliefs, utterly at war with the spirit and teachings of Christ, are being adopted and defended to an extent that is alarming.

Is it any wonder that, with pride, caste, fashion, and formalism in our churches, skepticism so widely prevails? Yet the skepticism of these days is quite different from that of the last century. It is not the coarse, vulgar system of Voltaire and Paine. It *praises Christianity,* and thinks the Saviour, in many respects, *a model.* But it is the same godless system, only under a new name. And yet, it is this eclectic system that has recently received the sanction of some of the best educated minds in Boston, and *on which* it is proposed to build the Church of the future. The three-fourths of the secular literature of the day is tainted with it. Its advocates are legion; from Emerson, who writes stately articles in the *Atlantic Monthly,* to the miserable penny-a-liner who writes "the last sensation" of love and murder for the benefit of the people.

It is noticeable, also, in this connection, what bold demands infidels, spiritualists, and others, are making, and to what lengths they mean to go. Dr. Patterson, of Chicago, a few months ago, in *The Christian at Work,* presented an array of argument and figures, so far as the attempt to break down the sanctity of the Sabbath is concerned, perfectly appalling.

He says: "It is not the mere rabble who are the most active in this war, but their best educated men.... The editors of three of our English dailies advocate the abolition of the Sabbath as a day of rest.... It appears to me this malignant opposition to any recognition of God, to His worship, and to His Sabbath, and to His Bible, is the beginning of that last manifestation of ungodliness foretold by Paul."

It would be superfluous to show, in this connection, the rapid strides that Romanism, Spiritualism, and other false systems are making for the overthrow of evangelical truth, and the control of the country. "He that runs may read." So far as Romanism is concerned, the recent action of the New York Legislature for the support of sectarian schools; the rapid increase of its churches, nunneries, and institutions; the confident tone of the leading men: the million of dollars or more spent yearly for the perversion of the freedmen of the South (for political ends), are all indications of the most serious and momentous character.

As for Spiritualism, whether its boast of increase be true or not, there can be but one opinion respecting its fruits. Bitter and sad these fruits are, and, beyond all estimate, wretched upon the morals of the nation. In *The Religio-Philosophical Journal,* February 20th, 1869, is this outrageous statement: "In

Digitized by Google

licentiousness we find an outcropping of the God-element in man. It seems somewhat difficult to attain the end desired, and to make plain to all that vice may be virtue, and discord harmony. We do say, however, that virtue is one condition, vice another; *both equally commendable in the sight of God.*" Is it any wonder that, with such teachings as this, the floodgates of immorality are opened, and vice and crime, of the deepest dye, stalk broadcast in open day? Is it any wonder that, under the plea of "Reform" and "Rights," such insidious teaching obtains, that the laws of marriage are being relaxed, the number of divorces yearly increasing, dishonesty, licentiousness, murder, unheard of atrocities, darken the columns of all our papers, till one trembles over their influence in our families?

To some this may seem a dark picture; but to those who look for light out of the darkness, and life out of the midst of death, and who see no hope for the complete redemption of this fallen world but in the administrations of the returning Redeemer, there is nothing in this picture but what might be expected. Surely it would seem as if the Saturday evening of the world's long, dreary week was upon us, and that the dawn of the blessed Sabbath cannot be far distant. Wherefore, let us gird up our loins and be sober. While we "sigh and cry for the abominations" that are around us; while we weep as we think of the multitudes of souls deluded, and destroyed, and rushing on to a hopeless eternity; while we look with dismay upon the incoming flood of vice and worldliness, let us not neglect *present duty.* "Occupy till I come" is the Saviour's command. Waiting, looking, longing for the heavens to open and reveal to us our Lord, let us nevertheless, as the days darken and the clouds thicken, be more than ever in earnest to hold up Jesus, to disseminate his truth, and, through Divine grace, pluck as many souls as possible from the everlasting burnings,—so, working and waiting, shall we be prepared to welcome our King, and to have him place upon our brow not a starless crown, but one sparkling with many jewels.

J. W.

EVILS ABOUNDING.

One of the most marked and offensive emanations from the "form of godliness" now so prevalent, is the tendency to introduce novelties in religion. Everything is done to *entertain, amuse,* or *create a sensation;* all weariness of the flesh and spirit must be carefully guarded against in public worship; the place of prayer and praise must be made as attractive as the place of amusement, or this formidable rival will probably engulf many who have renounced the world and its vanities.

The expedients to secure this end are as diverse as the temperaments of the individuals who originate them. Some ministers, whose political proclivities cannot be restrained even by the sanctity of their office,—which certainly does not authorize an interference with worldly politics, in the exercise of its sacred functions at least,—entertain their deeply interested auditors with eloquent political harangues,—too often mere *stump-speeches,*—the only effect of which is to make men more strongly partisan in political feeling than before.

Others again, appreciating the sentimental and poetic taste of their hearers, discourse of beautiful brooks, trees, flowers, birds, etc. They appeal to their sympathies, and melt their souls with touching delineations of earthly affection, or harrow their feelings with thrilling pictures of separation from the loved ones of their homes or social circles.

Others aspire to something greater, and instruct their audiences in the different sciences; and a yet larger number deal in vague abstractions, and the whole Gospel of Christ is never heard from them. If Christ and Him crucified be faithfully preached, there will be no danger from special forms of error; and ministers will not be under the necessity of indulging in bitter denunciations against evils of which the greater portion of their congregation knows nothing. Thus is Christ but little preached, and this may surely be regarded as a novelty characteristic of these days.

This same desire to have things conducted in as entertaining and amusing a manner as possible, also manifests itself in the want of reverence—we had almost said flippancy—in

Digitized by Google

the demeanor of ministers, and laity, too, at meetings convened especially for the transaction of church business. The sober-minded and the devout have been frequently shocked at such indecorous proceedings, but as these persons almost always make more pretensions to piety and spiritual-mindedness than those who venture to disapprove of their manner of conducting public worship and meetings, they have submitted to the imputation of formalism and generally remained silent. The exhibitions of clerical buffoonery, too, with which the country is sometimes entertained, cannot fail to have a most injurious effect, whilst the thoughtful and the reverent cannot but mourn at the desecration of so high an office. Very recently we saw this conduct rebuked, as it deserved to be, in a highly respectable religious journal, and we felt as if we would like to see the article extensively circulated.

Another novelty is the fairs, festivals, concerts, and, in some extreme instances, *masquerades*, that are held for religious purposes. A close observer cannot fail to see their demoralizing tendency, and yet such is the general approbation, that the few who venture to offer a protest are stigmatized as fanatics and hypocritical pretenders to superfluous degrees of piety. Many of the adjuncts of these so-called religious charities are of so objectionable a nature, and it seems they cannot be conducted without these abuses, that we know not how it is possible for a Christian to justify them.

Even the *music* of the churches excites the sadness, pity, and almost disgust of those who are not carried away by the stream of worldliness and fashion. They feel that such music has "no unison with our Creator's praise;" and often the question arises whether it would not be more profitable to absent themselves entirely from churches where abuses prevail in every department of the service.

In the Sunday-schools the influence of these novelties is still more extensively seen. The hymnology, exhibitions, speeches, prizes, picnics, are all of a piece. The children are certainly *amused and entertained*, the humorous speeches excite their risibilities, and they quite enjoy their Sunday-schools. Far be it from us to render religion unattractive or repulsive to young or old. We have heard little ones of three years of age singing "While Thee I seek, protecting Power," and "Jesus, Lover of my Soul," and seeming to enjoy it, too. We have heard others, a little older, spontaneously break forth in their play with "Glory be to God on high;" and their little hearts seemed full of love to God in their pure happiness and glee. The words were not unintelligible to them, nor sung because they constantly heard them; but they had been taught to understand the object of praise and adoration, and their full hearts gave utterance to what they felt in their joy. We do not suppose all Sunday-schools are misconducted, but, such is the general rule, that it has become problematical whether they are not doing more harm than good. We intended speaking of the pernicious character of many of the books in the libraries, and we know whereof we affirm, but we leave that at present.

Such, it seems to us, is the Church of the present day. In her own estimation, "rich, increased with goods, and having need of nothing;" and yet so "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked," that we greatly fear God will, ere long, "spue her out of His mouth." She is beautiful to look upon with her gorgeous temples, her stupendous benevolent enterprises, and her many zealous votaries. So it was in the days of Constantine, and we know the ages of deathlike darkness that succeeded this seemingly prosperous era. She is asleep, and the enemy has indeed sown tares. No wonder iniquity and infidelity of every kind stalk abroad in the land. No wonder spiritualism blasphemously announces in one of its papers the anticipated advent of a wonderful woman—"the Deific Mother," as they wickedly style her—who is to rule over the earth, and that at the name of woman "*every knee is to bow and every tongue confess;*" that God has hitherto only revealed the masculine side of His character, and that now the feminine is to be developed. No wonder, under the circumstances, that such blasphemy should pass unnoticed and unrebuked. It is saddening to dwell upon these things; and much more might be said, but we

Digitized by Google

must forbear. Like Jeremiah, we must sometimes "cry aloud and spare not," although it is an exceedingly painful and ungracious task.

Seeing, then, that these things are so, "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" What influence does the "blessed hope" *we* entertain exert upon *our* lives and conduct? Are we shining as lights in a dark place? Though the light is here, and "the darkness comprehendeth it not," shall we, who are "the children of the day," from an amiable complaisance towards our brethren, who construe our hopes and professions into a repulsive display of superior knowledge and piety, be drawn into this vortex of worldliness and darkness? Whilst this dispensation lasts, the wheat and tares must grow together; but shall not our conduct say how "holily, and justly, and unblamably" we demean ourselves in these perilous times?

If we really are convinced of the truth of our doctrines, are we not more censurable than our incredulous brethren if we profess to have the light and yet walk not by it? Are we diligently "occupying" at our posts, accomplishing that most difficult injunction, "using the world as not abusing it;" realizing that any moment we may have to give an account of our stewardship, and undismayed by the sneers, obloquy, and persecutions of our adversaries.

Surely this "hope" should be able to effect as much; and, where it is entertained in sincerity and earnestness, it has accomplished great and blessed results. We have read biographies of great and good men; we have watched the career of eminently pious and gifted ones, who seemed peculiarly favored of God; and with intense longings and aspirations have followed them through their self-denying labors and almost marvellous achievements; have yearned with feelings almost unutterable for their heavenly-mindedness and serenity of spirit in the midst of trials, persecutions, and distractions; and have suddenly discovered that all was mainly attributable to the "blessed hope" they entertained of their Lord's speedy coming. It was an incentive to endurance and exertion that nothing else could give. It is a joyful thought that so many of the "giants" of *these days* are millenarians, and that many of those who have passed away were also, although, when their example first provoked our admiration and emulation, we were not conscious of it. This has helped strongly to recommend our doctrine to us, irrespective of the elements of power, holiness, and consolation it contains within itself. As an encouragement to others, we will mention that in conversation with a clergyman on this subject, he voluntarily admitted, although he was no believer in millenarian doctrine, that those Christians who truly believed these blessed truths were the most earnest and devout of all others; and that he greatly respected them because they so honored the Bible, and made that alone the foundation of all their teachings.

As the long night of "watching" is wearily extended, we feel that there is great danger of letting go this "blessed hope," and would express our obligations to E. E R. for his timely and excellent admonitions. His writings have ever been profitable to us, and may we not hope that he will use every effort to arouse the drowsy virgins ere their dozing becomes profound sleep? The imminence of this calamity is not imaginary.

OBSERVATIONS ON MATT. 10:23.

But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come.

THIS text is a part of our Lord's charge to His twelve Apostles, on the occasion of their ordination to the apostolic office. It is a favorite passage of the opponents of pre-millenarianism, who quote it as a proof that *the coming of Christ*, so often predicted in other passages of the New Testament, meant something that was to occur in the days of the apostles.

Some suppose it to mean that, before the apostles should complete their earthly career, Jerusalem would be destroyed. Some, that while the apostles yet lived, Christ would be raised from the dead, and establish his spiritual kingdom. Dr. J. Addison Alexander says of this text: "*Until the Son of Man be come*, an indefinite expression, meaning sometimes

Digitized by Google

more and sometimes less, but here equivalent to saying: 'till the object of your mission be accomplished.'"

In order to teach us what our Lord really meant in this particular case, the Holy Spirit has given us a parallel passage in Luke 10:1: "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face, into every city and place *whither he himself would come.*" No one can doubt what *this coming of our Lord* means. They were to go before Him, and prepare the people to receive and welcome Him at His actual personal coming. Making Capernaum His headquarters, our Lord made itinerary excursions in different directions, through the cities and villages of Galilee, returning frequently to the house of Simon and Andrew, at Capernaum. At first He sent His apostles to prepare the people for His reception. "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The king dom of heaven is at hand."

As His fame spread, and the labor became too great for the twelve, He said: "The harvest truly is great but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." And He appointed the seventy to perform this missionary duty, and to prepare the way for the great Teacher.

The instructions to the twelve and to the seventy, are extremely similar, and, in many respects, identical, as will be seen by the following parallel passages. May we not reasonably conclude that the coming of Christ referred to in connection with each discourse is the same, viz., an actual personal visitation, which was to follow that of His disciples thus sent, to prepare the way for Him.

Note the coincidence of these extracts from the two discourses:

Charge to the Apostles.	*Charge to the Seventy.*
Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.	Go your ways: behold I send you forth as lambs among wolves.
Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves.	Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes.
And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.	And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not it shall turn to you again.
And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.	And in the same house remain eating and drinking such things as they give; for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.
As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils.	Heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.
And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house, or city, shake off the dust of your feet.	But into whatsoever city ye enter and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you.
Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.	But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.

Dr. Joseph Addison Alexander, in his commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, his last work, alludes to the interpretation I have given in the following language:

"There is another explanation of this clause which refers it to Christ's following the twelve in their first mission, as He did the seventy. (Luke 10:1.) The meaning then is, that before they had fulfilled the task assigned them, He would be Himself upon the spot to protect them or direct them further. The objection to *this otherwise*

Digitized by Google

good sense is simply that it disregards the reasons which have been already given, for considering this portion of the chapter as a subsequent or supplementary discourse relating not to the immediate mission then before them, but to later and more trying times."

It is strange that Dr. Alexander should object to what he acknowledges to be an *otherwise good sense*, upon this ground; since the same objection would apply with equal force to the passage he refers to in Luke, where no other interpretation can, by any possibility, be put upon the meaning of the words. Indeed, the commencement of the address in Luke to the seventy, and of what Dr. Alexander supposes to be the "supplementary discourse" to the twelve in Matthew, are identical.

E. M.

THAT DAY.

Onward time speeds its flight, days, months, and years
Roll swiftly by, and soon the day will come,
That solemn day, when Christ shall come again:
Come in the clouds of heaven, to judgment come.

On flying clouds the King of kings appears;
Millions of angels His attendants are.
The spirits of the just made perfect come
With Him; they come prepared to dwell
In bodies raised from death and glorious made
Like to the glorious body of their Lord
Raised by His power to immortality,
To glory and to everlasting life.

He comes, not as a babe in manger laid,
But as the King of kings and Lord of lords;
Not to be scorned by scribes and angry priests,
But as the sovereign Judge of quick and dead.

Hark! what a shout is raised from all the host
Of saints and angels who attend their Lord,—
A shout which wakes the earth, a shout of joy,
A shout of victory, a shout of praise,
A shout of hallelujah to the Lord.
And then is heard the Archangel's powerful voice,
And louder than ten thousand thunders sounds
The trump of God, and opened are the graves,
And from all lands and from the ocean's depths
Come forth the righteous dead, quickened to life,
The mortal raised to immortality,
Corruptible, with incorruption clothed,
Death swallowed up in victory and life.

The living righteous in a moment changed,
With all the risen saints ascend on high
To meet their Lord and ever with Him dwell
Receiving that blest kingdom, by the Lord
From the foundation of the earth prepared,
For His beloved ones, His chosen saints.
All hostile powers upon the earth arrayed,
The beast and the false prophet overthrown,
And Christ the Lord triumphant over all.

Behold, the earth restored, in beauty drest,
All lovely, as when Adam at the first
In Eden dwelt. New heavens and new earth,
Where righteousness shall ever dwell, where peace
And love and joy forevermore abound.

Down from the heavens, all glorious descends
The New Jerusalem—the Church of God.
With songs of holy triumph and of praise
The saints with Christ descend, the earth to take
As their possession, heritance divine.
All shine resplendent as the noonday sun,
From every face reflected joy and peace,
And every heart filled with the purest love.
Majestic, in the midst of all is seen
The Saviour, who redeemed them with His blood

God's tabernacle then shall be with men,
Jesus shall reign upon His rightful throne,
Reign in Mount Zion gloriously, and reign
King over all the earth. Before Him bow
Clothed in white robes, and with victorious palms
In all their hands, the saints by Him redeemed.
To Him all praise—to Him triumphant songs
By the innumerable multitude are sung.
The earth restored shall blossom as the rose;
The kingdoms of the earth shall then become
The kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.
All hearts shall then be filled with love divine,
All praise forever rendered to the Lord.
No sin, no pain, no sorrow shall be found,
For all the former things have passed away.

O blessed Saviour, in that glorious day,
Prepared by thy rich grace, may we, with
Songs and everlasting joy upon our heads,
Be there to render glory unto Thee,
And sing those anthems of sublimest praise.

S. S. W.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

WHERE IS THE PROMISED KINGDOM OF GOD?

"The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein. for he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods."—Ps. 24 : 1.

THE *promised* kingdom must be when and where it now is not; else it could not be promised. It is at hand to come, not where it is already; but from heaven to earth, where it is prayed for to come. Neither does it come to this world, but only the promise of it. Where, then, shall it appear? In earth, after this world passes away; for the earth is one, its worlds are several; one before the earth was drowned: "this present evil world;" and "the habitable world to come of which we speak." Τὴν οικουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν περὶ ἧς λαλοῦμεν. Heb. 2:5. The past, the present, and the future world all belong to the earth. Neither this world, nor its prince, have any part in the promised kingdom; but they flee away before its coming. They disappear forever, and give place to the King of righteousness and His kingdom, coming in earth as in heaven. This present world is evil and transitory; the future is blissful and eternal. This creation is mortal, corruptible, and passing away; but the world to come is immortal, incorruptible, and never passes away. The earth is the same planet always, but, like our vile bodies changed and fashioned in the King's own likeness, the earth shall be changed, made anew, and with its heavens be fashioned into the holy city and heavenly country of covenant promise, and shall be prepared for the abodes of the blessed.

This life and world are temporal, the future ones eternal. When the Scriptures predicate anything concerning the earth, or the world, the nature of the thing predicated will show to which world, or earth, it belongs; whether the temporal or the eternal. Anything promised in the world or the earth, to outlast time, as the kingdom is promised, must of necessity belong to the world to come with the new earth which God will make. The eternal promises, the everlasting covenants, are made and given in this world to mortals; but they are paid and discharged to immortals in the glory and immortality of the future world. The time of the kingdom is future and infinite; but the place of the kingdom is definite and fixed. We are not at liberty to fix the time; we are not at liberty to change the *venue*, or the place, where in the holy law *the scene of the action is laid.* When the law and the testimony say *earth*, or *world*, we must inquire, whether this or the next be meant. But we must not change the *venue* laid down in the law; we are not at liberty to read "earth" in the law, and change the scene of action in our mind to the sun, moon and stars, or to infinite space. The time is reserved in the Lord's power; but the place of the coming kingdom is abundantly declared.

The scene of the promised kingdom of heaven is, by the holy law and testimony, laid in the world to come on this earth. The King and His kingdom being eternal, the realm of His abode, the scene of the action, and the people of His realm, must be also eternal. They of necessity belong to the future world of the new heavens and earth which shall never pass away nor be destroyed. We are bound to locate the action where the Scripture lays the scene, that is earth; but the terms of description decide whether the scene belongs to the temporal or to the eternal world; to the mortal, or to the immortal race; whether to this land of death, or to the coming land of life; whether to this fallen Jerusalem, or to Jerusalem above, which is free; whether to the earth under the curse of sin and death, or to the earth in which there shall be no more curse. We must not change the place of the action from the earth, but only inquire to which state of the earth the action belongs, whether to the present and temporal, or to the future and eternal state.

It requires no words of ours to prove that the promised kingdom of heaven belongs to the future and eternal state of this *earth*, see-

Digitized by Google

ing it is so laid down in all the books of the law and the Gospel, and pledged by God the Father to His only begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord, saying, "I shall give thee the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Ps. 2:8. "Unto thy seed (which is Christ, Gal. 3:16) will I give this *arets*, earth." Gen. 12:7. To Adam, the first, the dominion over all the earth was given. Gen. 1:26. He lost it. To the seed of the woman, the Son of the blessed, it is pledged for an endless dominion. Ps. 8:6. "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him." Dan. 7:13, 14. "Truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." Numb. 14:21. "Unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." Ps. 45:6. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and He shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:31. "Every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord." Phil. 2:11.

The King is Jesus, the testimony of whom "is the Spirit of prophecy." His kingdom is foretold by the prophets, preached in the Gospel, prayed for in the Church, without ceasing, and sure to come with God's will done, in *earth* as it is in heaven. We may devoutly ask, whether the King, and the kingdom, and the people promised, are to be manifested in this world, or the next? and whether the throne of the kingdom is to be set up in the earth that now is, or in that which is to be? To this question only one answer is possible. Seeing that the King, His dominion and realm, and His subjects, are eternal and immortal, the scene of their manifestation can only be in the heavenly and eternal world of the new creation. No mortal may attempt to change what the lawyers call the *venue*. That is laid down in the written law and in the preached word, as belonging to the eternal world, and to the regenerate earth; to the King and kingdom of the resurrection from the dead, for which we according to His promise look, in "a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3:13. In the heaven and earth of the new creation is laid down the site, and is spread out the scene, or the ground plan of the city and kingdom of God; in which "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." Is. 40:5. "The whole earth shall be full of his glory." Is. 6:3. "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" Is. 11:9. "O let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth." Ps. 67:4. "His name shall endure forever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed." Ps. 72:18. "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth. In that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one." Zech. 14:9. "Let the floods clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together before the Lord; for He cometh to judge the earth." Ps. 98:8. "He cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." Ps. 96:13. The Lord says "earth;" who shall say to Him, "Nay?" Who shall say, "Not earth, but heaven?" Who shall say, "Not in earth; but in boundless space?"

Blessed be the name of the Lord who "came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe the Gospel." Mark 1:14. Blessed be the name of the Lord, who teaches us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth."

FORESHADOWS OF ANTICHRIST.

MANY and marvellous were the types of the Lord's Anointed, before the angel of the Lord announced to the shepherds of Bethlehem the birth of Jesus Christ; and scarcely less numerous and marvellous are the foreshadows of the last Antichrist, the man of sin—the son of perdition. Nimrod, Pharaoh, Balak the King of Moab, with the prophet Balaam; Goliath of Gath, Saul, and Sennacherib, King of Assyria,

Digitized by Google

dimly prefigured the mighty being to whom Satan, the god of this world, in the closing days of this dispensation, will give "his power and his throne, and great authority" (Rev. 13), so that *all* the world shall wonder after and worship HIM—the man of sin, whom Satan delighteth to honor. But it is especially during the times of the Gentiles, when God transferred power from Israel to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, the great head of the Gentile world up to the second and glorious coming of Jesus Christ as King of Israel, that we find prominently brought out, in typical representation, the blasphemous language, idolatrous practices, and persecuting acts of the last Antichrist, the man energized by Satan (2 Thess. 2 : 9), into whom he will enter, as he did into Judas, the son of perdition. (Luke 22 : 3.) If we examine what Daniel has recorded concerning Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, to whom the God of heaven gave a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory, so that wheresoever the children of men dwelt, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven, all were given into his hand, God having made him ruler over them all (Dan. 2 : 37, 38);—for as dominion had been given to Adam at the creation (Gen. 1 : 28), and to Noah after the deluge (Gen. 9 : 1–3), so universal dominion was here given by God himself to Nebuchadnezzar, as king of kings, the golden head of the Gentile world—we shall find a characteristic development of the last head of Gentile supremacy. Indeed, we find under each of the four great governing powers to whom God gave authority, whether Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, or Roman, a shadowing forth of the actings of the last great embodiment of evil, Satan's masterpiece, THE ANTICHRIST. In the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, the king, placed on a lofty pedestal, an image of gold (doubtless an image of himself), and required all people, nations, and languages, at the sound of musical instruments, to fall down and worship the golden image, which he, as king of kings, had set up, threatening with death, by burning, all who should disobey his commands. (Dan. 3.) Thus we have a foreshadowing of the idolatrous practices and persecuting tyranny of the last Antichrist, when setting up an image, and causing that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. (Rev. 13.)

If we pass on to the second kingdom, that of the Medes and Persians, we have in Darius, the king, a further development of the man of sin. In order to destroy Daniel, whom the king had preferred above the presidents and the hundred and twenty princes who were set over the whole kingdom, the presidents and the princes persuaded Darius "to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree;" which writing, when signed, could not be changed, "according to the laws of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." (Dan. 6.) But what was this royal statute? What the sum and substance of this unalterable decree? It was, that the king, by the advice of his princes, should put himself in the place of God, forbidding his subjects, upon pain of death (namely, being cast into the den of lions), to ask any petition of any God or man, save of Darius the king, for thirty days, thus making himself, for this brief period, the only being in heaven or on earth, to whom supplication was to be made. In like manner, the son of perdition, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thess. 2: 3, 4); and will "cause all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads: so that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark." (Rev. 13 : 16, 17.) Thus, in the acts of the Babylonian and Persian monarchs—Nebuchadnezzar and Darius—we have foreshadows of Antichrist as an *idolater* and a *persecutor* of the people of God; whilst, in the wonderful deliverance of the three Jews, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, from the burning, fiery furnace (Dan. 3 : 25), and of the prophet Daniel from the jaws of the hungry lions, we have an earnest of the gracious deliverance of the faithful Jewish remnant in the last days, from the devices of Satan, that roaring lion, and from the bitter persecutions of the personal Antichrist, the false Messiah, of whom our Saviour spake in John 5 : 43: "I am come in my

Digitized by Google

Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

In the Jewish tribulation and persecution during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes (see Josephus' Antiquities, 12th book, chapter 5)—the capture of Jerusalem; the slaughter of the inhabitants; in the putting down the Levitical sacrifices and ceremonies; in the defilement of the temple and God's altar by the erection of an idolatrous altar and image—we have a still further revelation of the author of the last tribulation, the great one still to be endured by the seed of Abraham at the hand of Antichrist (Dan. 12:1; Jer. 30:7; Matt. 24:21) before the times of the restitution of all things are ushered in by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Passing from the kingdom of Greece, in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, to the Roman or fourth kingdom, as seen by Nebuchadnezzar in the vision of the great image, formed of divers metals, and by Daniel in the vision of the four terrible beasts which came up from the great sea (Dan. 7:2, 3, 17), we have in the idolatrous practices of the Church of Rome—in her persecutions of the children of God, the saints of the Most High; in the exaltation of the creature in the place of the Creator; in the setting up "the abomination of desolation" (or idol) in the place where men assemble to worship God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; in all these acts of the Papacy, for the lengthened period of 1260 years, we have a remarkable setting forth, indeed a rehearsal of the idolatry, persecution, and self-exaltation of the man of sin during the last 1260 days of the present dispensation; the exact period of our blessed Saviour's ministry, and also of the persecution of the Jews and profanation of the temple in the days of Antiochus. (See Prideaux's Connection, vol. iii, p. 283; Oxford, 1820.) Thus the prophet Daniel (to whom it was given to interpret the dream of the king Nebuchadnezzar, and to make known the commencement of the times of the Gentiles, during which Jerusalem should be trodden down, and her people be subject to Gentile rule) beheld, also, in vision, the end of the Jewish tribulation—the resurrection of the just, and the destruction of every opposer of God's Israel. May we give heed to what Daniel the prophet, "the man greatly beloved," has written for our instruction respecting "the times" in which we are living (chapters 2, 7), and more especially respecting the closing scenes of the great Jewish tribulation, and the destruction of the "wilful king, the wicked one," at the glorious epiphany of the Son of Man, at whose coming, with all His saints, Israel shall be delivered, and Jesus, as David's son and David's heir, shall reign over the twelve restored and converted tribes, "on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously." Then will "the kingdoms of the world become the manifested kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." And as earth's sovereign Lord, Jesus shall receive glory and honor from all people, nations, and languages, for year by year shall men come up from all nations to Jerusalem, "to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles." (Zech. 14.)

THE DAY OF THE LORD.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—2 Peter 3: 10–13.

To the preceding confutation of those, who at the end of the days should be found deriding the ancient hope of the Church respecting the Lord's return in "power and great glory," the Apostle now adds his own positive testimony to the certainty, the manner, and the consequences, of the coming of that day of the Lord which the event in question should introduce, and he at the same time points out the practical bearing of this truth on the life of Christians.

I. First, *the certainty*: "*But*"—notwithstanding the taunts of these ignorant and contemptuous gainsayers, and however protracted

Digitized by Google

may be the interval (vv. 3–8)—"*the day of the Lord will come.*" Or the connection may rather be with v. 9: "*But*,"—let none presume on the delay vouchsafed to men by the Divine long-suffering, as if it were going to last forever—"*the day of the Lord will come.*"

This "*day of the Lord*," or "*day of God*," (v. 12), is none other than the "day in which God will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained," and is therefore also known in Scripture as "the day of the Lord Jesus"—the day of God in Christ.

At present Satan, as the god of this world, has his day, and man has his, the Supreme Being meanwhile having seemingly withdrawn from the supervision and control of human affairs. At least, His enemies bear themselves as if He really had done so. But in "the day of the Lord" the Lord alone shall be exalted. The Lord God Almighty will take to Him His great power and reign. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. And when this day reaches its noontide, in what our Apostle calls "the day of eternity," then too shall the creation attain to the zenith of faith's brightest anticipations, and God shall be all in all.

For it can scarcely be necessary to caution you against the absurdity of taking "*the day of the Lord*," to be a day of twelve hours, or of twenty-four hours. It is, on the contrary, the most glorious and lasting of all the Divine economies—a day which shall have no night, and will be followed by no to-morrow. Its dawn is at the appearing of Christ the second time without sin unto salvation, and its forenoon hours extend through the long ages of the apocalyptic millennium and mediatorial reign, whose termination is signalized by the instantaneous suppression of the last desperate outbreak of evil, the second resurrection, and the closing acts of judgment.

Now, says Peter, "*the day of the Lord*,"—a phrase first used by Joel (1:15; 2:1; 3:14) eight centuries before—so long promised, so long expected, and, as you thought, so oft deferred, "*will come*," *will arrive* at last; nor will the indifference of the world, or the slumbers of the Church, or the jeers of scoffers, hinder its coming. Whatever else in the future is uncertain, this is sure and inevitable. And what is there in our poor speculations about the future, or in the deepest and most far-reaching schemes of statesmen, or in the glowing visions of patriotism, that will bear comparison with this? All these may again, as they so often have in times past, disappoint the confident hopes of men; and still it remains firm as the decree, true as the oath of God, that "*the day of the Lord will come.*"

II. And how will it come? That was our second point: the *manner* of the coming or arrival of the day of the Lord. It will come, says our text, "*as a thief in the night*," or simply "*as a thief*;" the words, *in the night*, being wanting in the best manuscripts, and probably introduced into others from 1 Thess. 5:2.

This figure of the thief is the one that oftenest occurs in the scriptural illustration of this solemn theme. And the ideas most readily suggested by it are unexpectedness, surprise, hostility, loss. But it is evident that to the faithful, longing children of God the great crisis will wear no such aspect. "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." To them it will come as the day of their redemption—"as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth"—no dread, unforeseen catastrophe, but the joyous fulfilling of the desires and prayers of the weary night-watchers. And it is also true that in the heavens and on the earth and sea there will be signs of the coming doom, numerous enough and portentous enough, it might be supposed, to arrest the attention of all. But even these will be overlooked or misinterpreted by a giddy, reckless, self-confident generation. "The wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand." And so the great day *will arrive*—will have set in—will be actually upon men—ere ever they are aware of its presence; and its first acts of judgment, in the resurrection of the holy dead, and the change of the

Digitized by Google

living saints, and the simultaneous ascent of the gathered multitude into the descending cloud of Christ's glory, may all pass without creating so much as an eddy or a ripple in the rushing streams of ungodliness. But very soon these streams will have a sudden arrest laid on them. The lightning of God will flash on the tottering pillars of the world, startling sinners from their vain dreams, only to know that their house has been broken into, and to realize the greatness and remedilessness of their loss. And then will the cry of their horror and despair mingle with the roar of the passing heavens and the kindled earth.

III. For consider, in the third place, *the consequences* of the coming of the day of the Lord.

Some of these consequences have already been mentioned incidentally, to which, as well as to others clearly enough indicated elsewhere, there is no reference whatever in the passage before us. For example, it is, I think, demonstrable that among the many glories that go to make up the brightness of the future age subsequent to the Lord's second advent, is the glory of the restored Israel and of "Jerusalem, the city of the Great King." But Peter here says not a word about that, any more than about the resurrection of the dead. Having still in mind the argument of the scoffers from the asserted durability of the present cosmical arrangements, he mainly limits his view to the change that is to pass over the material creation, when it too "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God."

Another point of no less importance, and the failure to observe which has, perhaps more than anything else, given rise to endless mistakes and difficulties, is this, that, in describing the transformation of the present into the future world, the writer does not allow himself to dwell on the steps of the process—the stages, so to speak, of the transition—but takes in the whole work at one glance, and as consummated in the one day of the Lord. This, indeed, is well known to be the prophetic style, as when the Old Testament throughout depicts the times of Messiah in such a way as to leave scarcely visible the interval between His first and second comings—between the cross and the throne. Nor does the specification of the six days' work of creation in the first chapter of Genesis hinder even the inspired historian from immediately summing up the whole at the beginning of the second chapter thus: "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, *in the day* that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens." Only let there be due allowance for the operation of this same principle of interpretation, as we read the statements of Scripture respecting things to come, and we shall avoid very many occasions of stumbling.

After all, however, it were utterly foolish and presumptuous in us to insist on having these various statements of the numberless details of this wonderful work of God so clearly explained to our weakness and ignorance, and so nicely sorted and adjusted in their mutual relation, as to leave nothing to perplex our apprehension of the infinite theme. And the folly and presumption will be no less great, if we think to get rid of our perplexities by either ignoring or wresting any plain declaration of the sacred word. Let us do our best, and there will still remain difficulties for us in connection with this and every other Divine operation—difficulties which the day itself must solve. As it is only "through faith" that "we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God," so it would be strange indeed, if, in contemplating through the glass of prophecy the emergence of the new creation from the ruin that sin has wrought, there were found no room for the exercise of the same gracious spirit.

Taking with us, therefore, these few preliminary cautions, let us briefly review the announcements of our text.

"*The heavens shall pass away with a great,*" or *rushing*, "noise;" certainly not the heaven in which God and the angels dwell. Nor is it necessary to include in the meaning of the word even the starry heavens. Throughout this whole context (vs. 5, 7, 12, 13) it seems evidently to denote merely the heavens belonging immediately to our earth—the firmament of Genesis 1: 6–8—the atmosphere—the domain of the clouds, and birds, and, as Scripture

Digitized by Google

intimates more than once, of the evil spirits. Having shared in the defilement of sin, "*the heavens*" also shall undergo the purification of fire. "They shall be changed," "*shall pass away with a rushing noise*," as of whirlwinds, or, some would say, as of a house falling into ruins, and that amidst crackling flames. In v. 12 it is said that *by reason of* the day of God, or *in consequence of* its coming, "*the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved*"—loosened, as it were, from their present attachments and sent adrift, or dissolved internally, like any other fuel of fire. But let us not think of introducing into this description, as has sometimes been done, the ideas and conclusions of our modern chemical analysis, by way of helping us to account for either the sights or the sounds of this appalling scene. The Apostle is not at all concerned about the scientific exactness or possibilities, but, in aiming at a religious impression on the hearts of his readers, uses popular language to describe phenomena, as they shall hereafter impress themselves on the senses of men. Accordingly, the same word, that is used of the heavens in v. 12, is in the next clause of v. 10 used of the elements:

"*But the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat;*" whereas in v. 12 again the corresponding clause reads, "*And the elements shall melt with fervent heat.*" Nor can I think it worth while to refine as to the precise import in either place. In v. 10 some connect the clause especially with what precedes respecting the heavens, others with what follows respecting the earth; and the word *elements* has been variously referred to the sun, moon, and stars—an idea altogether foreign to the scope of the passage—to the four elements of the ancient philosophy, fire, air, earth, water—to two or three of the number—and even to the constituent parts of water alone. But all such strictness of definition is probably beside the mark. The clause is best taken generally, as including whatever comes under the power of this great conflagration; and the elements will be, according to the popular sense of the term both in Greek and English, the smaller parts that go to make up the whole.

It is then added by way of climax, as that which comes most nearly home to our human feelings, "*and the earth and the works therein*"—whether of nature or of art—"*shall be burned up.*" The clause is so framed as to suggest at once the universality and the particularity of the judgment—its minutely searching as well as its far-reaching operation. In the language of (Is. 2: 12–17): "The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: and upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, and upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

Such, then, are some of the terrible results of the coming of the day of God.

And now you may well ask, in reference even to this fair visible framework of creation: But is that all? And is this indeed, in the words of the dying statesman, "the last of earth?"—of that earth which God made in the beginning "very good"—from which in every age have ascended to His throne the prayers and thanksgivings of believing souls—the birthplace and the grave of His own Incarnate Son? Is it, after all—yea, though it has been baptized with the Saviour's most precious blood—to be reduced to perpetual ashes, or an everlasting chaos, if not perchance put out of existence altogether? And will not such an issue be the triumph of Satan the Destroyer, rather than of Christ the Redeemer?

It cannot be denied that just such wild notions as these have long been floating, for want of better, in the common mind of Christendom, and that in some quarters the Church is still taught to anticipate, as a matter of praise, the time when "the universe shall burn, and God shall destroy His own works," instead of those of the devil. But for the too general prevalence of this woful chimera Shakespeare, as I

Digitized by Google

have elsewhere remarked, may be largely responsible, not Scripture:

"And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like the insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind."

That, no doubt, is fine poetry, but it is neither good philosophy nor Bible doctrine. The idea of the future annihilation, or eternal desolation, of this world of ours, has absolutely nothing to sustain it in the analogies of nature, the deductions of science, or the teachings of Scripture.

What! some one of course will say, does not your text expressly assert that the heavens shall pass away, and the earth be burned up? Yes, I answer, and it likewise asserts expressly: "*Nevertheless we*"—or simply, *But*—"*according to His promise, we*"—we Christians—"*look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein righteousness dwelleth;*" *dwelleth* being the last word, and emphatic: *dwelleth*, as in her own secure and eternal home.

Now there surely can be no good reason for supposing that God will make this new creation out of nothing, when here are the materials of the old creation ready to His hands. Or if you still ask me to reconcile this passing away of the old into the new with the Apostle's strong word, *shall be burned up*, I think it sufficient to point you back to the sixth and seventh verses, which declare that the ancient world, the original heavens and earth, "*perished*," *was destroyed*—quite as strong a word—in the deluge, and then reappeared in its existing form, as "the heavens and the earth which are now;" the days of Noah thus furnishing the most signal example and type, not only of the judgment, but also of the salvation, of God.

We have, however, says Peter, for the foundation of our hope, something more direct and explicit than types and inferences. We have a Divine "*promise*." And had he been asked, Where? he might no doubt have repeated what he once declared in his preaching, that "by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began hath God spoken of" these coming "times of the restitution of all things." But it is generally agreed that, in speaking of this restitution under the name of "new heavens and a new earth," he has an immediate reference to Isaiah 65: 17 (comp. 66: 22; Rev. 21: 1): "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."

If, therefore, you would have a glimpse of that future world as it was shown to Isaiah, you have but to examine the description given of it by God Himself in the very passage that Peter had in his eye, when he wrote the words before us; and be not hastily offended, if you find there things that surprise you: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old; but the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."

You at once perceive that, while there are great changes here foretold in the present condition of things, the features of resemblance also are numerous and striking; just as the

Digitized by Google

ark of Noah carried over into the world that followed the flood very much that belonged to the world that preceded it, and even the returning dove bore "in her mouth an olive leaf plucked off," and wet with the waters of judgment. In like manner, taking Isaiah and Peter together, I see not how the conclusion can be evaded, that in that world for which we are still looking, after the coming of the day of God, after the conflagration, and after the Church of the resurrection and the translation—the Church of the first-born—the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb—has been received into the undefiled and unchanging glory of the new heavens, there will be continued on the new earth successive generations of men in the flesh, under conditions of most blessed amelioration both physical and moral, and absolutely secured throughout the long millennial age against the wiles and assaults of Satan, but not yet made perfect, nor free from all attaint of sin and death.

This much is so plainly revealed, that we are not to be deterred from believing it by the difficulty, were it ever so great, of explaining in what way the race shall be enabled to survive the conflagration. But that difficulty really loses its force, as soon as you make proper allowance for possible exaggeration in our conceptions of the extent and effects of the fiery trial, which many indeed suppose will reach no further, in the first instance at least, than to what is called the prophetic earth, or the territory of Christendom, and the four great Empires of Daniel's visions. Then remember what has already been said of the duration and stages of this judgment—of the several hours of this great day of the Lord—and it is nothing at all to be wondered at, if its rising be attended by mists of the morning, which shall disappear in the splendor of its meridian. But if any shall still judge that these two considerations do not fully meet all the necessities of the case, we can then fall back on the principle, so largely illustrated by our Apostle in the second chapter, that "the Lord" who saved Noah with his household from the ruins of the old world, and Lot from the flames of Sodom, and, we may add, the three young faithful Hebrews from Nebuchadnezzar's burning fiery furnace, though heated one seven times more than it was wont to be heated, "knoweth how" to make good, and to reconcile, all His words, both of warning and of promise.

IV. A few words in conclusion on the *practical inference* drawn from the solemn prospect thus opened up to the faith of the Church: "Seeing *then* that *all these things shall be dissolved*"—it is even more emphatic in the original: *Since then, all these things are dissolving;* their doom being even now written on them, and working in them—"*what manner* of persons *ought ye to be in* all *holy conversation and godliness*," literally, *in holy behaviors and pieties;* "*looking for and hasting unto the coming*"—or rather, as in the margin, *hasting the coming*—"*of the day of God.*"

That "the fashion of this world passeth away"—that, like the body of man, this world in all its present arrangements and interests, is "dead because of sin," and must pass through dissolution into regeneration and a higher form of existence—is reason enough in the apostolic estimation why we should not be conformed to its evil ways, nor seek to make it our portion and our rest. Having here "no continuing city," let us cherish and manifest the spirit of "strangers and pilgrims," and in our relations both to men and to God be governed by the law of our heavenly citizenship. Observe that the habitual expectation of "the coming of the day of God" is urged by Peter upon his brethren as being at once a characteristic mark of the true Christian, and itself a most powerful motive to universal holiness. And so it is everywhere represented throughout the New Testament; as where Paul takes it for granted that, if we are to be proficients in the school of the Divine grace, "living soberly, and righteously, and godly, in this present world," we shall be found "looking for the blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." Peter's language even goes beyond that. He is not satisfied that we maintain, in regard to that day, the attitude merely of a passive expectancy. Our whole Christian life should be a distinct, direct effort to "prepare the way of the Lord," and so to *hasten*

Digitized by Google

His coming. This glorious consummation we can, and ever ought to, actively promote, by hastening the work of our own preparation, by the energy of prayer, and by the strenuous use of the appointed means for the speedy accomplishment of the number of God's elect.

THE COMING OF OUR KING.

The coming of Jesus is a precious theme, never ceasing to afford consolation and refreshment. It is not soon tiresome and exhausted of interest, but a perpetual fountain of joys; frontmost, midmost, and topmost, amid all hopes the most fruitful of themes, and lending sweetness to everything related to it. It stands a tower of glory amid Bible topics and promises, itself the best and fairest promise. Why is it unwelcome to many who profess a love for the Saviour? Why is it disapproved, discouraged, disrelished, and dismissed, when, where, and by whom it should be welcomed, loved, cherished and defended? Why is it not eagerly received into Christian societies and associations as the most delightful subject of conversation? Why is it so hard and so rare to find an avenue or a means of its introduction into religious assemblies? Why is there such an array of opposition to it? Alas! it is deemed an innovating and obtrusive theme. But it is sweet, grand, and powerful, notwithstanding. Around it revolve a glorious array of vital Bible truths, and from it issue unspeakably important results. The coming of Christ is the great hope of the Church, and, rightly understood, is her only hope and supreme necessity. It is not a subordinate concern, but first, single, and absolute, as a fixed condition to any and every future fruition beyond this life. Without it there can be no immortality, no eternal life.

No wonder, then, it is of such towering proportions in the teaching of the word of God, and in the esteem of the rightly instructed believer. But in what a maze of darkness is the mass of Christiankind in our day involved respecting it! Darkness, which is nevertheless disavowed and unperceived. Darkness in regard to related events, both as signs and consequences; darkness in regard to the order and manner and time of the advent, a darkness which amounts, to a great extent, to a practical negation of the fact itself, and a practical neglect of the event in the very time and act of its nearly prepared and tremendously imminent advance. Why is it thus, and how long shall it be thus? Nevertheless, the wise can understand and rejoice in the onward march of events, as couriers going just before the hour and power of the return of the High Priest and Prince of the people of God, to reign forevermore.

INCREASE OF EARTHQUAKES.

Mungo Ponton, in his *History of Earthquakes and Volcanoes*, thus sums up the whole number of earthquakes on record, and their distribution over time, and says:

Regarding them chronologically, Mr. Mallet distinguishes the registered earthquakes into five periods, thus:

	Total.	Disastrous.	No. of Years.
Recorded before A. D.,	58	4	1700
To end of 9th century,	197	15	900
To end of 15th century,	532	44	600
To end of 18th century,	2804	100	300
To 1850,	3240	53	50

It will thus be perceived how very great has been the increase since the beginning of the Christian era; and although much of this increase is due partly to more perfect registration, and partly to there being a larger portion of the earth's surface comprehended in the records, still there are good reasons, as already indicated, for suspecting that there has been a gradual augmentation in the number of earthquakes themselves, more especially of the more disastrous kinds. Our Saviour may have foreseen this increase when He said that among the signs—"There shall be earthquakes in divers places."

Judge Ludlow, in a recent charge to the Grand Jury of Philadelphia, says:

"There is now a carnival of crime raging, and it is false to say that it is confined to the city and county of Philadelphia. It spreads itself to all our great cities, and the battle rages more fiercely than ever between virtue on the one side and vice upon the other. The irresistible logic of facts has developed the fallacy of the system that has been put in vogue by the humanitarian ideas of the day. We are told that even life is not safe in this community, and this is true."

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE MILLENNIUM.

Translated from J. NISSEN's "Unterredungen über den Kleinen Katechismus Luthers."

THIS is a most weighty doctrine. What is to be said concerning it may be grouped under these heads: The Course of this World in Church and State; The Antichrist; The Second Coming of the Lord; The First Resurrection; The Thousand Years' Reign; The Restoration and Glory of Israel; and the admonition, warning, consolation, and hope thence to be derived for every Christian.

I. THE COURSE OF THIS WORLD IN CHURCH AND STATE.—The development of universal history. How shall it be if the world is to continue? Shall things perpetually improve? or become worse? What shall the end be? These are questions upon which all worldly wisdom can give us no answers, or, at best, very uncertain, dark, and unreliable ones; but with reference to which, as in every other case, the Word of God is a light to our path. Happy he who lays it to heart and builds upon it! Our Lord and Saviour, after that He ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God, has foretold us how the course of things respecting His kingdom shall be, and what shall be the end of the same. Very especially has this been done in the Revelation of John. That is properly, as stated in the first verse, a Revelation of Jesus Christ, to show unto His servants that which must come to pass speedily, which He sent by His angel to His servant John, who attested the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ: "Blessed he who readeth, and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and observe the things which are written in it, for the time is near."

It is a false, widespread idea, to which we yield quite too readily, that the Gospel once introduced into the world and embodied in the Church, must now ever more and more impregnate and pervade everything with its blessing: state, art, science, and civilization; and that just in this way a universal renovation of the world is to be brought about. But the Holy Scriptures everywhere and throughout, in all the prophecies, as well in the Old Testament as in the New, present a very different conception of things. Daniel beholds the fourth and last worldly monarchy which came in with the advent of Christ, under Augustus (chap. 7:7), as a dreadful and terrible beast, artful and with human eyes, and a blaspheming mouth. And, as in Rev. 13 and elsewhere, this same "beast" again comes before us, we learn from Daniel that this is the world-power, and that worldly affairs are chiefly denoted by it; for we must interpret the pictures of the Revelation according to the entire presentation of the prophetical books of the Old Testament. John also sees (chap. 12:1) a woman, which is the Church of God; for both Testaments contemplate God's covenant with men as a marriage. In chapter 17, this same woman comes before us again, but is now come to be an adulteress; that is, has forsaken her lawful Lord, become untrue to him, and fallen away from him. Yea, she sits upon the beast; that is, the Church has apostatized and given herself to serve the world, and become worldly; the world-power also lays aside its hatred to Christendom, and becomes outwardly Christian. The Church and its members should let their light shine into the darkness of this world, and be a transforming power, by means of which all humanity should become pervaded with and partaker of its own essence and Divine life. But the world-power and the Church enter into partnership with each other. The apostate Church does not testify enough; does not resist sin enough with the Word of God, which is the proper sword; does not enough condemn earthly tastes and feelings; and does not enough point men heavenward. Her Lord Jesus Christ, and the goods and blessings of His house, to the majority of her members, are

Digitized by Google

not their one and all. Alas, how many follow the ways of the world, and forget that they are pilgrims and strangers here; fear the world's frown, and seek after its applause; to whom honor, riches, and pleasures of this life appear to be the only things worthy their efforts. The Word of God is not the one and all to them, but by its side, and often more esteemed by them, is the wisdom and science of earth. This conformity with the world, this living of the worldly life, and this leaning upon the world and its favors, is what constitutes the woman's adultery, and is the great and weighty sin of the apostate Church of God. The world also, for its part, rewards her for it with goods, money, and honor. Now, where such a state of things exists, and who will deny that such is largely the case, whether we take the Evangelical or the Catholic Church, whether in respect of the Pope, the emperor, the king, or the preacher, teacher, citizen, and peasant, there is the adulteress who sits upon the beast, there is a secularized Christendom and a christened world, and both together shall be most fearfully judged, as the Revelation of John further shows. It is therefore our great business, in these last times, first of all to save ourselves from this untoward world, that we may not perish with it, and then also to save others.

II. The Antichrist.—Christ nowhere says that the world shall continually increase in love to Him and His affairs, and that enmity toward Him shall after a while entirely cease; but, on the contrary, that it shall become more and more intense, especially in the last times. So the word of God foretells already in Daniel 7: 25, where it is prophesied that in the fourth empire there shall come one who shall speak blasphemous things against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws. (Chap. 11: 36.) And he shall do according to his will, and he shall exalt and magnify himself above every thing, and speak dreadful things against the God of gods, and shall prosper until the wrath of God is accomplished, for it is determined how long it shall be. Also in chapter 12: 1. Quite the same concerning these last troublous times, only still clearer, is prophesied in the Apostolic Epistles, especially in 2 Thess. 2. There the Apostle says (v. 1, 2) that the day of the Lord and His coming was not yet then so near; (v. 3), that that day should not come except there come a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed, and the son of perdition. Thus, before the second coming of the Lord, there was to be an apostasy, whose prolific vastness is more closely described in the succeeding verses. This apostasy shall be specially manifested in some particular man, who is called the man of sin, for the reason that his whole nature throughout is sin, and that he promotes sin in others; and the son of perdition, because he shall go into perdition and draw others with him into the same. He is also (v. 4) an opposer; that is, one who sets himself in opposition to God and everything that is good and holy. Hence this man is elsewhere in the Scriptures called the Antichrist. (1 John 2: 18.) "Little children, it is the last time;" that is, we are living in the period of the fourth and last empire; "and ye have heard that Antichrist shall come;" and in v. 22, "He is Antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." Quite in harmony with Daniel is it said in 2 Thess. 2: 4, "He exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" Furthermore, this entire period in which this Antichrist, this king domineers, is described as a period in which sin is fearfully potent. (1 Tim. 4: 1.) "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith," etc. (2 Tim. 3: 1.) "In the last days perilous times shall come." (2 Thess. 2: 9.) Antichrist's working is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders; and because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe lies. What the man believes and loves, that shall he be; they have not believed nor loved the truth through which God wished to save them, but had pleasure in lies and errors; so shall they also receive the rewards and punishments of the same.

Digitized by Google

In Matthew 24:3, the disciples inquire concerning the signs of the Lord's coming, and the Lord gives them as the signs (v. 5 and 24) the coming of false prophets and false Christs (v. 6, 7), wars, tumults, famines, pestilence, hatred and persecution towards true Christians (v. 10–12), offences, faithlessness, enmity, unrighteousness, and waning of love; to which is added (v. 37, 38) carnal unconcern, as it was in the times of the flood, when they ate, and drank, and made merry with each other. But in this last and deepest extremity (Luke 21:28), the true people of God are to rejoice and lift up their heads for the reason that their redemption is at hand. For (2 Thess. 2:8) the Lord shall consume the wicked one (the Antichrist) with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of His coming.

During this time, also, shall the Jews be persecuted. (Dan. 7:21, 25.) This is a matter of course, for a true Israelite can never take part in the worship of the beast. The common distress shall bring closer together the people of God of the Old and of the New Testament, against this new heathendom; and with that is bound up the conversion of Israel. (Rom. 11.) In these great straits shall Israel inquire after his God and Messiah, and if they then shall see Him coming in the clouds, they shall also rejoice and say (Matt. 23:39), "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

III. The Second Coming of Christ Himself.—When the pride of Antichrist, and the self-security and fearful sins of the world, as the straits and griefs of God's people, have reached their highest point, then shall Jesus Christ be revealed from heaven, to make an end of the course of this world, and to establish His glorious kingdom upon the earth. There is a distinction to be drawn between Christ's coming, in this instance, and the final judgment. Concerning His coming to set up the kingdom of His glory on earth, we may read in Rev. 19:11–21; Dan. 2:34; 7:9–14, 26, 27. The same coming is spoken of at many places by the ancient prophets, where they prophecy of the blessedness and peace of the Messiah's time; for example, Is. 2:2–4; 11:11; Ezek. 34:23–31; Micah 3:1, 2; Zech. 2:4, 7, 8; 9:9. It is to this coming the Lord refers, Matt. 24:29, as distinguished from 25:31. The expression, coming of Christ, in the New Testament, has a much wider signification than in ecclesiastical and modern language. This revelation of the Lord will doubtless be a visible appearing. They shall *see* Him coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory. (Matt. 24:30.) He shall come in like manner as ye have *seen Him go into heaven*. (Acts 1:11.) He cometh with clouds and every eye shall *see* Him. (Rev. 1:7.) The Church of God passes out of its concealment, in which it now finds itself, as an invisible Church. Your life is hid with Christ in God, but when Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. (Col. 3:3, 4.) The entire scene is full of magnificence. The Lord comes as Judge and King, and with Him the heavenly host (Rev. 19:11–16); at the same time mighty movements in the world of nature occur. (Rev. 6:12; 11:19; Matt. 24:29; Is. 13:6; Joel 3:3, Zech. 14:5.)

One of the first things which the Lord shall do, when He appears, is the overthrow of the beast and false prophet. The antichristian world-power goes into perdition. (Rev. 17:8, 11: Gal. 6:8.) The appearance of Christ is of itself enough to make an end of Antichrist and his dominion; as Paul says (2 Thess. 2:8), and shall destroy him by the brightness of His coming. The Antichrist and the false prophet shall be cast alive into the lake of fire; into hell. With that, once for all, is this beast-business done away; the world-powers, in the relations held by them till that day, shall cease; history shall take quite another character; and, in the place of the beast-kingdom, shall come in the kingdom of the Son of Man and his saints—the kingdom of God.

IV. The First Resurrection.—Christ comes visibly, and departed believers also come with Him, and come forth from their invisible state. (2 Thess. 1:10.) Besides, it is necessary that they should be clothed with bodies, in that the entire man, body and soul, goes into the glorified life. This is the first resurrection, con-

Digitized by Google

cerning which Rev. 20:4–6, treats in contradistinction from the second, at the general judgment in Rev. 20:12, 13. In this first resurrection all the martyrs have part, according to v. 4. As they became most like Christ in death, so shall they also be in glory. Then, also, all who have not worshipped the beast, and thus separated themselves from the common world. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (v. 6.) Of this first resurrection the Lord treats in Luke 14:14, where He speaks of "resurrection of the just." Paul, also (1 Cor. 15:23), distinguishes three stages of the resurrection: first, Christ; afterward, they that are Christ's, at His coming; afterward, the last, namely, the general resurrection. Touching the first resurrection, is also the passage in 1 Thess. 4:16: "the dead in Christ shall rise first;" and in Phil. 3:20, 21.

Then the still living saints shall be changed, the old body, without dying at all, passing over into the glorified body. (1 Cor. 15:51–53; 2 Cor. 5:4.) According to this last text, Paul entertained the hope that he might, perhaps, live to be taken in this way; and thus this change is not first and only to occur at the end. Clothed with the new and glorified body, then can also take place what is written in 1 Thess. 4:17: "We which are alive and remain, shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus shall we be always with the Lord." These resurrected saints, and these glorified saints, now pass, with Christ, into the heavens; for the unglorified world cannot yet be the locality of the glorified Church. From the heavenly regions shall the saints now reign with Christ over the earth for a thousand years. They are priests of God, because they serve God day and night in His temple. (Rev. 7:15.) A new dominion is introduced into the world; namely, that of Christ and glorified men, who, through redemption, have become all that they are.

V. The Reign of the Thousand Years.—What concerns the earthly side of this reign, is summed up in the Old Testament, in Dan. 2:35, 44; 7:13, 14, 27; and what concerns the super-earthly side, in the New Testament, in Rev. 20:1–6. The kingdom of God appears with Christ. (Matt. 12:28.) It extends itself in a hidden manner spiritually in the world. "The kingdom of God is within you." It came to the Gentiles, by the Church, for the most part after the destruction of Jerusalem. (Matt. 16:28.) But properly the kingdom of God, in royal glory, first comes with the second coming of Christ, and after the judgment upon Antichrist. (Luke 19:11, 12, 15.) The Saviour also teaches us to keep praying with reference to this kingdom, "*Thy kingdom come.*" Nor is this now only the eternal state of blessedness after the final judgment, in which the perfected kingdom must needs eventuate (Matt. 25:34), but what has already been an earthly, Israelitish, but, indeed, not a fleshly kingdom of glory; as also the prophets have always painted it, whom Christ nowhere contradicts in this particular, but whose predictions he approbatively assumes. (Matt. 19:28; Acts 1:6–8.) Just as earnestly as we must be on our guard, on the one side, not to go beyond the Scriptures (against which the XVII Article of the Augsburg Confession cautions) in picturing out this doctrine; just as little, on the other hand, dare we understand spiritually the plain words of holy Scripture, and so condemn it.

The principal proof-text is Rev. 20:1–6. The first thing to take place is the binding of Satan. (v. 1–3.) As with the death of Christ the accusations of Satan in heaven ceased (Rev. 12:7–12), thus, in the millennium, his dominion on earth is at an end. So long as the devil still rules in the darkness of this world, we all live in an atmosphere that is poisoned and impregnated with deadly elements. (Eph. 2:2.) Is the prince of this world, who works in the children of disobedience, and the god of this world, who blinds the eyes of them that believe not, that they see not the true light of the Gospel, now bound and out of the way? Then sin has lost much of its power, and goodness may more freely develop itself.

The next thing is the government of the earth by Christ and His glorified Church. As

Digitized by Google

these glorified saints are alike kings and priests (Rev. 1:5; 5:10), so shall their government be a priestly government In the place of the Satanic rule, shall come an administration, not of men who still live in the flesh and seek the indulgence of their own pleasure, nor yet of good angels, arbitrarily put into authority, but of glorified men, who themselves have become what they are only through the power of redeeming grace. In them shall it be known what Christ, by His grace, can and desires to accomplish for men. The same attraction which the possessions, power, and pleasures of this world now exercise over the mind and heart, shall then be exercised by the blessedness of the glorified Church. With true delight shall all then submit to obey the priestly kings, and Jesus their Head. (Ps. 110:3; Hab. 2:14.)

In this millennial kingdom there cometh a true and God-serving rest. Secular and spiritual jurisdiction are no more distinguished; the world shall delight itself in God; all art and science, all intercourse, shall be alike Christian and worldly, for the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ. (Rev. 11:15.) In the millennium, Christianity shall reach its full external victory; be unconditionally acknowledged by all potentates and *magistracies*; be the most blessed perfection of all occupations and situations of life, as they all, from the highest to the lowest, shall be grounded and sanctified in the Lord. (Zech. 14:20, 21.) Wars, also, shall cease, and nature itself shall participate in the pervading blessedness. (Is. 65:20–22.)

VI. The Restoration and Glory of Israel.—Along with the coming of Christ, apostate Christendom shall be judged and overthrown, and His true people have been gathered with Him in the sky; or, in the language of Revelation, the beast, and the adulteress, which is great Babylon, and the false prophet, and those who worship the beast, shall be destroyed; and the Lord's Bride hath gone to himself. (Rev. 21:2, 10.) The people still living upon the earth are then either Jews or heathen, the same again as it was at the time of our Saviour's ascension. But with mighty energy still as then can Christianity now work. Then began the Church, now shall begin the Kingdom. We assume that the Jews and heathen have already heard of the Gospel before the appearance of Christ, then the visible coming of the Lord in His glory, the overthrow of the antichristian power, the rapture of the saints, and the cessation of all fanatical proceedings on earth, must all make a deep impression upon the peoples who survive and see it. Now then the veil of Moses (2 Cor. 3:14, 16), and the covering which has been upon the people (Is. 25:7), shall be taken away. Israel again comes into the foreground, and here are fulfilled the manifold predictions concerning Israel's conversion and restoration to the beloved land. (Rom. 11:25), "I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery; that blindness in part [a great part] is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved;" that is, when the elect number of the Gentiles in the Christian Church have been brought in (Luke 21:24), when the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, then all Israel as a people shall be saved. Of this conversion and restoration of Israel all the prophets are full; for example, Lev. 26:31–45; Deut. 28:62–68; Is. 2:2–4; 11:11; Ezek. 34:23–31; Hos. 2:16–25; especially Zech. 12:10, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son." Also Ps. 110; Ps. 2. All these and many other prophetic texts declare, that Israel shall go back to his own country, sin shall be vanquished, the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the entire land, and God dwells by His Messiah among His people. Israel thus seeking and finding his Saviour, the heathen also shall of themselves come to Him, and their delight shall be to walk in the light of God. In Acts 3:19–21, Peter exhorts: "Repent, and be converted, that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, when He shall send Jesus Christ, whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution (restoration) of all things, which

Digitized by Google

God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." Subsequent to the time of this remark (Acts 1:6), the disciples asked in so many words, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" What the Lord promises to His disciples as the reward of their faithfulness (Matt. 19:28, and Luke 22:28–30), also has reference to this time: "In the restoration (palingenesia, restoration), when the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit on twelve thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel."

VII. The weighty Character of this Doctrine.—Inasmuch as the holy Scriptures speak of this matter in so many places, it must needs be of importance to us. To whom should it not be a satisfaction to glance into the unsearchable judgments and ways of God, and into the depths of the riches both of His wisdom and knowledge.

When, then, shall all these things come to pass? We know not. It does not pertain to us to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power; Acts 1:7. But this does pertain to us, and this should we do, to know the signs of the times given us in God's word, to be sober and considerate, to observe, to watch, that we may escape all these things, and to stand with joy before the Son of man.

We deduce from this subject a special consolation. We behold, alas! often, that our efforts in behalf of the kingdom of God are not crowned with the success which we would naturally and rightfully expect from the Gospel as the word of God. Hence we readily become sluggish, weary, and doubt the Divine word of promise. But this is a wrong way of looking at things. It is not to be questioned that Christianity has done much to soften, establish, and to improve things; but the office of the Church is not to convert and renew the world, but to save out of the world which lieth in sin as many as it can. To this end it is necessary, above all, that every member of the Church should give vigorous testimony for Christ, in thought, word, and life—that Christians should shine as lights in the world. This is now the office of every true disciple. The world's conversion, and the bringing of Christianity into full dominion, is a matter which belongs only to the Lord.

We, therefore, also derive from this subject an admonition and warning for ourselves. The Lord has expressly said, in speaking of these things: "Remember the word which I spake unto you." "Take heed that no one deceive you;" that is, that ye may not be condemned in the general ruin. "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass," namely, the judgments which shall befall the godless world. "Stand fast, and hold the traditions (the things delivered to us in the holy Scriptures) which ye have been taught." "Go not after them;" "Thou shalt not follow the multitude to do evil;" testify; stand by the word of God. And if evil men should even become worse, keep to what you have learned.

As to hope, the apostle admonishes to be joyful in it. And for this we have every reason, for we know now surely, that the Lord will triumph over all His foes. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" 2 Pet. 3:9. The concluding words of the holy Scripture are: "He which testifieth these things sayeth, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus."

From the sixth ed. Kiel, 1859, pp. 524–533.

FALSE CHRISTS.

Our blessed Saviour, in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, and, just before his crucifixion, uttered this prediction: "Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. . . If any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and won-

Digitized by Google

ders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before."

Something of the kind thus foretold 1800 years ago, is just now exciting some attention in Poland. A man has appeared in a country district there, who pretends to be Jesus of Nazareth come again for the salvation of the world. He has selected twelve followers, who go about the country with him as apostles; and he pretends, in the usual manner of such people, to work miracles. He devotes himself particularly to the healing of the sick. All this has had a great effect upon the Polish peasantry; the would be prophet and his followers have been everywhere received by them with open arms. He is now turning his success into political capital. He denounces the peasantry for their indifference to the rising of 1863, calls upon them to repent and prepare for new efforts, and prophesies the speedy re-establishment of the old Polish kingdom. The authorities might look with indifference upon religious pretensions of the impostor, but they naturally do not feel quite so easy about passionate appeals to the people to rise against the existing government. They are, therefore, using all means to put the movement down. They are, apparently, finding the task a somewhat more difficult one than they at first anticipated. It may seem like a trifling affair, to be mentioned in connection with the solemn words of our Lord's great prophetic discourse, but it is not without significance in these critical times.

FAITH.

(Fas est et ab hoste doceri . . . . . .)

Glory to God, whose witness train,
Those heroes bold in faith,
Could smile on poverty and pain,
And triumph even in death!

Scorned and reviled, as was their Head,
When walking here below,
Thus in this evil world they led
A life of pain and woe.

So we sing: and we do well. It is right to praise God for "the glorious company of the Apostles"—"the goodly fellowship of the prophets"—and the "noble army of martyrs." But it is *not* good to glorify the past, and neglect the great issues of the present. It is *not* good while filled with the baneful modern Whitbyan heresy, and boasting of orthodoxy, to the disparagement of others, to build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, in doubtful company.

These thoughts have been suggested by the following lines found in a penny book open before us; and if our readers do not think there is venom in them, but only a sharp point, we will print them.

It was by *faith* that Abel brought
The sacrifice, as God had taught.

Enoch knew not the quivering breath;
He tasted not the pains of death.

One uncorrupted man was found—
God's witness to the world around.

By *faith* a hundred years was he
Building a ship, far from the sea.

Abram in *faith* is first and chief;
He staggered not through unbelief.

Isaac, in *faith*, did meet the wife
Whom God designed to bless his life.

Twelve sons around his dying bed
Listened to what old Jacob said.

By *faith*, and with his latest speech,
He spoke the destiny of each.

By *faith* the youthful Joseph seems
To comprehend mysterious dreams.

Moses, by *faith*, did mighty things—
He served Jehovah, King of kings.

Caleb and Joshua spied the land;
God gave them *faith* to understand.

Rahab, by *faith*, staid on the wall,
Though Jericho was doomed to fall.

Barak and Jephthah could not boast;
By *faith* they overcame a host.

A mighty man was Gideon: he
By *faith* did seek for victory.

How touching is the *faith* of Ruth,
A lonely widow in her youth.

See Samuel, servant of the Lord,
Pre-eminent in *faith* and word.

Digitized by Google

David, the simple shepherd boy,
Had *faith*, like gold without alloy.

Elijah, too, by *faith* was led,
And God supplied his daily bread.

Like Enoch, he ascended high,
Borne in a chariot through the sky.

Josiah's *faith* could not be hid;
'Twas seen in every work he did.

And Daniel, in the lion's den,
Had *faith* scarce known to mortal men.

What *faith* did Shadrach, Meschach know,
And their third friend, Abednego!

By *faith* young Esther sought to bring
Her wise petition to the king.

Ezekiel's *faith* in prospect shows
The restoration of the Jews.

By type he shows how God's elect
Shall from dry bones stand up erect.

And many a one whom we might tell
By *faith* has served Jehovah well.

They were his prophets, priests, and kings,
And looked beyond all earthly things.

Gone into rest, they wait the day
When this age shall have passed away.

And then, amid the heavenly bowers,
The things once hoped for shall be ours.

The above (in substance, abridged, and slightly modified) is published by an otherwise excellent society, whose printed motto is: "An evangelical ministry, an active Church, and a sanctified press, the hope of the world!"

Now if faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, why should it be thought incredible that God should raise the dead, and why should we be put out of the synagogue because we believe it? If they believe because some things have been fulfilled, why should not we believe because God has spoken? Therefore, let us still hold fast the form of sound words which we have heard (2 Tim. 1 : 13), and earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (Jude 3)—(Enoch prophesied of those who oppose it). Let us pray to be preserved from having men's persons in admiration because of advantage (v. 16), and from sacrificing duty and conviction to interest. And let us cry more and more earnestly to the true, to the True Hope and Regenerator of the world (Acts 3 : 21): "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

E. E. R.

THE BRUISED REED.

"A bruised reed shall he not break."—Is. 42 : 3.

God is here speaking by the mouth of the prophet. His message to Israel is, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets," in the way of clamor, disputation, and factious demonstrations. "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench."

An old commentator applies this as a prophecy concerning Cyrus, the conqueror of Babylon, and his dealing toward the Jews in setting them free from their long captivity. But we are not left to human conjectures and opinions as to the person to whom it refers. Inspired authority has forever settled that point. Our Saviour, on one occasion, having on the Sabbath day healed a man who had a withered hand, the Pharisees endeavored to entangle Him by cunning questions. Baffled by His superior wisdom and goodness, they "went out, and held a council against Him, that they might destroy Him. But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew Himself from thence: and great multitudes followed Him, and he healed them all; and charged them that they should not make Him known." He wished to avoid having His enemies goaded and provoked into precipitate acts against Him, to their own destruction. In mercy to them He withdrew himself from their sight and knowledge. His earthly life exhibited many like instances, in which He turned aside from public contention, and street conflicts and disturbances, out of pure forbearance and kindness toward those who were seeking His life. St. Matthew, under the influences of the Holy Ghost, fixes his attention upon this, and beholds in it a fulfilment of what had of old been predicted. We, accordingly, find it written in his

Digitized by Google

Gospel, that all this occurred, "*that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the Prophet*, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased; I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench." Was it Cyrus, then, of whom the Prophet spake? or, was it not our merciful and gentle Jesus? Who can any longer doubt, when the Scripture itself so clearly decides?

We, therefore, take these words, as Matthew takes them, and apply them as the ancient Hebrew and the early Christian expositors applied them, to wit, as descriptive of our blessed Lord, the true servant of Jehovah, and the Redeemer of his people.

The passage is highly metaphorical. By *reeds*, the prophet means men and women, suffering under moral disability. Some have thought that He is referring to the Jews as a nation; but the reference is rather a general one, and comprises all those whose inner and outer life may be hanging by a slender thread, whether Jews or Gentiles. It is meant to be a description of Jesus, in the whole character of His mediatorial and saving ministrations, and so must hold good throughout every period of the Christian dispensation. It referred to weak, disheartened and oppressed people of the Saviour's time, and to all of like character since. And it sets forth great and precious Gospel truth, which is for us, in these last days, as well as for any other people. It is God's assurance respecting the Saviour whom He has provided for all the sin-sick and the poor in spirit. "*A bruised reed shall He not break.*"

What sort of a reed is contemplated, is not as certain as might be wished. Some take it as a reed-stalk. Such a reed is at best very slender and frail. When bruised, or in any way injured, it is the image of extreme weakness, scarcely able to bear its own weight, and ready to fall asunder at a touch. But the reference seems rather to be to a musical pipe, made of a reed, much used in ancient times by shepherds, and used in the East even at the present day. The word rendered "*bruised*," as in chapter 36:6, means split, cracked, or crushed, so as to unfit it in large measure for the uses intended. This would seem to refer to a musical pipe of reed, rather than to a mere reed-stalk. So, at any rate, we prefer to take it; and there is nothing in the case to forbid us so to do.

Such an instrument is neither very melodious or impressive, at best; and when bruised or split, is hardly worth preserving. The first impulse would be to break it up and cast it away. A shepherd would hardly wish to encumber himself any further with so trifling a thing, in such a damaged condition. But so tender and gentle is our heavenly Shepherd, that He is compassionate toward even such a disabled instrument. People who are in the condition even of a bruised reed, need not fear that He will cast them off, or break them up entirely.

Now this figure is very significant and suggestive, and illuminates the whole history of those whom it is meant to describe.

The shepherd's pipe was once a stalk, growing wild in the marsh. Its roots were in the mud, and its whole being in that state was worthless. This gives us a picture, and a very graphic one, of man in a state of nature.

But the shepherd made his way to that reed. Through the marsh and thicket he came to it, beheld to what uses it might be turned, and brought it out from the miserable wilderness. It never could have come out by itself There it would have stood, and died, and rotted, and sunk forever in the mire, but for the work of the shepherd in seeking it, laying hold of it, and bringing it forth. How graphic the image of what God has done to make of men noble instruments of his pleasure and praise!

Upon that reed, thus brought out from the marshy jungle, much labor was bestowed. The shepherd knew what he wished to make of it, and for what purpose he had selected and brought it. He had set himself down in the shade, to measure, and trim, and shape it. And day after day he had occupied himself opening and arranging in it the passages and conditions to adapt it to the sacred and pleasant

Digitized by Google

sounds that he meant to have it give out. How suggestive of the work of our heavenly Shepherd, in disciplining and preparing men to serve and praise Him!

But, after all his efforts and care, the shepherd finds his reed bruised, cracked, split, damaged, and in a poor condition to serve him as he designed. He tries it, but its sounds are imperfect, inharmonious, harsh, and untrue. It is next thing to useless. He might almost as well break it up, and cast it away. But this he is slow to do. He remembers how he sought out that reed, with what care he brought it forth from the marsh, what care and labor he had bestowed upon it, and the pleasant sounds he once got from it to cheer his heart and assist him in his devotions; and how can he give it up! Perhaps he may be able to restore it, to join its severed parts, to bind up the cracks in it, and still get some good music from it. He will make the effort. He will not break it up entirely. He will not cast it away as utterly useless. And this is the particular point which the text makes in the character and doings of the Saviour.

He had made such a reed of Israel. With His own hand had the Lord brought that people from the marshy jungle of the untutored world. When the Saviour came, He found them a damaged reed. He took them in hand, but found no right music in them. There were here and there some notes approaching the proper tone; but the instrument, as a whole, was almost wholly disabled by its rents, and full of falsities. Nay, it was so jarring and offensive in many of its expressions, that it could scarcely be expected that He would spare it, or bother Himself any further with it. But no; the Prophet had said, "A bruised reed shall He not break." "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." Mercy and gentle remedial measures might still make some improvement, and develop some good. And whilst the people were furious against Him, and sought to dash themselves upon Him in a way which would have been their utter destruction, He, for their sakes, withdrew Himself from them, and dealt gently with them for their recovery.

And so with all whom He has elected to be the recipients of Gospel grace. Our fathers were all once wild savages and heathen, sunk in swamps and morasses of sin. And many of their children, with all the culture and grace that has been bestowed upon them, are not much better now. But Christendom has been chosen of God, and we have each been brought out from the marsh to become musical reeds in the hands of our God. Great has been the labor and care bestowed, in the course of generations, to make of us what we ought to be. Yet, what are the most of us, but bruised reeds—poor damaged instruments, with scarcely a correct note in us? We think ourselves something; but, estimated by the Divine rule, how imperfect, defective, and deserving to be crushed and cast away! In knowledge of the truth, in moral vigor, in living faith, and steady goodness, how far below our privileges! And if God were to deal with us anything like what we merit, how utterly hopeless our case would be. But, so long as there is any possibility of improvement left, our heavenly Shepherd will not cast us off. Even to the last, He will not break the bruised reed, and continues to do for us for our eternal salvation. And where there is any spiritual life at all, no matter how feeble, or how shattered, He is interested and ready to nurse and foster it into strength and vigor.

Again and again, in His conduct and in His word, are we certified of this His compassionateness, longsuffering, and tender forbearance toward sinners.

How was it that He dealt with His disciples? Though full of errors and imperfections, even up to the time that He left the world, how did He nourish and encourage them? Little by little He led them on, never taxing them with things which they were not yet able to bear, and always sheltering and cherishing every motion of the feeblest faith and love. Sweetly did He draw them into familiar converse with Himself, neither upbraiding their slowness, nor severely rebuking their faults. One by one He sought to correct their errors, and to establish them in the truths of his kingdom. When James and John would have called down fire from heaven to revenge what they took as an insult, He only

Digitized by Google

said to them: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." When He found them ambitiously debating among themselves which of them should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, how gently did He inquire into their dispute, and with what affecting tenderness did He show them their mistakes, and the way to amend them! With what melting graciousness did He look upon Peter when he denied Him, and restore the faith of Thomas when that disciple had surrendered himself to the most unreasonable unbelief! And with all their weaknesses and faults, how lenient were His dealings with them, re-echoing at every step the truth of the prophet's words: "*A bruised reed shall He not break.*"

How was it that He treated poor afflicted souls in general, wrestling under the burdens of their sins! The penitential caresses of the sinful woman He did not repulse. More than once was it given out against Him that He was "a friend of publicans and sinners," and that He received sinners, and ate with them. Taking His stand amid the great congregation of earth's heart-stricken and soul-burdened population, He sent out the message on every side, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." And when, in their ignorance, folly, and unbelief, men gave no heed to His invitations, His spirit within Him seemed to bleed, as it gave forth the complaint: "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." All fulfilling what the Prophet said: "*A bruised reed shall He not break.*"

And what has been the history of His providence ever since! What sorrowing soul has ever sought for Him without being met with the tenderest forgiveness and welcome, no matter how great its sins! The fierce and persecuting Saul of Tarsus repents, and Ananias is despatched to baptize him, and he is welcomed into the highest ranks of Apostolic honors. Augustine turns from his life of debauchery and sin, and he is accepted as a child, and promoted to honored place among the most faithful and successful of the Church fathers. John Newton, amid the blood-guiltiness of an infamous traffic in human flesh, is struck with conviction, asks what he must do to be saved, and is met with the sweet promises of pardon, and becomes a model of ministerial piety and devotion. And no one, however debased, who has turned from his wickedness to seek unto the Lord, has ever been found to say that Jesus has not been good to him, and more gracious than words can tell. So true was the prediction: "*A bruised reed shall He not break.*"

Nor is this picture without suggestions as to the motives of such gentleness. It is all from our blessed Saviour's goodness, of course; which is a depth we cannot fathom. But the text carries with it some analysis of considerations which govern in the case.

The shepherd looks with a favorable eye upon his reed, because he made it. It is his own. It cost him much care and patient effort. He is not fully furnished as a shepherd without his reed. And, though it is not what he would like it to be, he finds delight in keeping his own workmanship, and in trying to improve it. Sinners, however guilty, are still God's creatures. Christ has suffered and died for them. It belongs to His office to have ransomed souls to praise and serve Him, and to enjoy His blessing. It is the joy for which His soul travails to have men conditioned to the music of heaven and filled with it. Hence, He is slow to cast off any. Where there is the slightest possibility of conversion remaining, or the smallest spark of life left in the conscience, His judgment lingers. And, to the very last, He weeps over rebellious Jerusalem, and sadly laments each one's unrelenting perverseness: "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?" "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim?"

The shepherd is loth to relinquish and destroy his reed, because he knows the scarcity of such instruments, and the difficulty of replacing them. He would rather have an imperfect reed, than none at all. There is at any rate a

Digitized by Google

great paucity of music in the moral world. The hills and valleys are full of discordant and unlovely sounds. The sweet notes of piety, gratitude, love and faith, issue from but few. Even those who give forth these blessed songs, give them very imperfectly. And though the reed made to sound them is bruised and damaged, and next thing to worthless, why break it up, or destroy the possibility of its being bandaged and tuned to the sacred melodies of redemption? It is only bruised. Some good notes may yet be made to come of it. Patience, tenderness, and remedial efforts, may perchance make it all right in the end. Hence, the bruised reed is not broken; harsh dealing with the guilty is put far away; and the unworthy sinner lives to be still further and further plied, that he may come to repentance and salvation.

And how precious and comforting this assurance of holy Scripture is!

When we look at the Church of our day, and observe the inroads which the world, heresy and schism have made upon it; how lacerated, distracted, rent, and disabled it is; how feeble and unsatisfactory is almost everything concerning it; we are sometimes tempted to despair of it; and many have become so disheartened and doubtful as to withdraw themselves altogether into all sorts of human conventicles, regarding them as quite as good, if not better, than the Church which the Lord himself hath founded. It would seem sometimes as if Satan must triumph, and that such fractured remains of the Church, as we have to do with, certainly could not live, and are scarcely worth our efforts. It appears sometimes as if it were past mending, and that no true music could ever come from it. Why spend our lives and substance upon such a split-up and deranged thing? But, let us not be too harsh in our judgments. It is still the property of our heavenly Shepherd. It is the reed of His choice, out of which He has brought much precious music in its time. What if it is much shattered, and damaged, and crazed, and clogged, so that scarcely an intelligible tune or note can be got out of it. It still is Christ's; and "*a bruised reed shall He not break.*"

When we look at the lives and character of the common run of the professing Christians of our day;—how worldly they are;—how feeble and confused their conceptions of the Gospel; how lacking in all the solid work of an intelligent and living faith;—how little hold religious principle has upon them; how they mimic and conform to the godless world around them, often running to the same excess of riot, and living for show and self rather than for Christ and Heaven; and how few they are who seem to have any real Christianity in them; we are almost prepared to say with David in his haste that, "all men are liars"—that religion is a mere sham, that piety is only another name for hypocrisy, and that nobody can be safely trusted. And it certainly is true, that the Christianity of our day is a very damaged and faulty article, compared with the sturdy, inflexible and self-crucifying form of religion lived by the primitive Christians. But whilst we must lament and deplore the shallowness, defectiveness, and often perfect hollowness of the religionists of these times, there still is something left—some remaining good. The reed may be sadly bruised, but Christ will not therefore break and disown it entirely. Some will be saved.

And when we look at ourselves, how far we have come short in what we most sincerely meant;—how weak, imperfect, and full of native corruption we find ourselves after all our efforts;—how easily we yield to what we cannot approve;—how ready we are to let go or to slur over principle, when earthly honors and gains are to be won by it;—what a strong hold the vanities, fashions, maxims and ways of the world have upon our feelings and lives;—how often we have been broken down in the midst of our most honest resolves, and most pious intentions;—how frequently we have been betrayed into sin, or pushed off of the track of correct behavior;—how miserable are our prayers and poor our endeavors, even when we intended the best:—we are many a time so disgusted with ourselves, disheartened, and self-condemned, that we hardly can dare to hope that such creatures as we can ever get to heaven. Poor bruised and damaged reeds are we all. But, let us not therefore despair. Our

Digitized by Google

heavenly Shepherd knows our trials and temptations, and can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. "*A bruised reed shall He not break.*" If there be anything of God in us, the least spark of faith, any spiritual yearnings, any real earnestness of endeavor to be God's people, we may still hope on, and pray on, and labor on. Christ will not cast us off. Once there was nothing left but our baptism, from which we had departed, a few texts of holy Scripture, a few crude ideas about sacred things which we more than half despised, a little dread of death and judgment, a few prayers said with unclean lips in moments of alarm or times of suffering and danger. And yet, even that unpromising beginning Christ fostered into the grace of illumination, of holy fear, of earnest attempts at prayer, and of some movements at least toward an improved and holy life. Nor is it too much to believe, if we will only hope and pray on, that He will also develop the poor notions of spiritual life that still stir in us, and in due time unfold them into a full reign of His kingdom in our hearts, and bring us by His own chosen ways to the homes of rest and blessedness. Though we be but bruised reeds, the promise is, that such He shall not break. Let the effort be poor, the progress slow, the situation unsatisfactory, if it be honest, and persisted in, humbly and patiently resting upon Him who gave Himself for us, we shall yet come out whole and accepted to swell the chorus of the eternal jubilee of the redeemed. For "*a bruised reed shall He not break.*" Even so weak and almost worthless a thing is still precious in His sight. Blessed assurance! What comfort it throws over our oft lacerated hearts! God seal it upon us to our everlasting consolation!

A WORD ABOUT OURSELVES.

We greet our readers with another double number of our serial—November and December in one. We know that many would prefer simply one month's issue at a time; but, in the straitened condition of our finances, by reason of the failure of so many of our subscribers to pay what is due us, we must economize all we can, and we save a little by printing two months together.

We thus close the seventh year of our publication. We have often thought of discontinuing this journal. The extra labor which it devolves upon us, and the feebleness with which it is sustained pecuniarily, has been very disheartening. Still, God has helped us safely through thus far, and we cannot but believe that it is His work we have been doing. Hence we have held on steadily. Considering also the far-extended influence of what has been given to the world through the *Prophetic Times*, the instruction and testimony which has gone forth in our pages, the extent to which our articles are copied and republished, and the marked fruits which have resulted from our endeavors, we have the satisfaction to believe that an important place is filled by our serial, that it has a good claim to existence, and that it is not our duty to discontinue it yet.

A minister of the U. P. Church writes: "The acquaintance I made with the *Prophetic Times* a year ago, was an era in my life. It is just the thing I needed, and seemed as if dropped into my hands by an angel of God."

A gentleman in Canada writes: "Being a reader of the *Prophetic Times*, and having been led by its arguments to give the subject of the second coming of Christ some earnest consideration, the result has been a radical change in my views upon that subject; so much so, that, having regarded the doctrine of the pre-millennial advent of the Lord as a vagary, I now regard it as one of the most important truths of God's word."

A pastor of the Reformed (Dutch) Church writes: "You are doing a good work. The subscribers in my congregation take a deep interest in the subject of prophecy, and in your articles explaining it. The Lord bless your labors."

A minister of another church writes: "I am surprised and very thankful to see how God sustains you in publishing the *Prophetic Times*, both as to means and time. I know you are often hard pressed: but, courage, my brother, you are doing a GREAT work, and it will be rewarded."

Digitized by Google

Even from a rectory in Australia tidings come to us: "I always long for the *Prophetic Times*. I prefer it to the R——, which is very fine. I do all I can to get the *Prophetic Times* well known. I think I see a change coming over people's minds. My prayer is that God may strengthen your hands in the work of the Lord. Rev. B. and Rev. W., of Melbourne, read your magazine with great pleasure and profit, and private individuals also."

A correspondent in Ontario writes: "I have been a student of prophecy these thirty years, and, to the best of my knowledge, there is no other periodical on this continent which advocates the primitive faith and hope so ably and consistently as your own. Let the words: '*No surrender!*' be inscribed upon your flag till the Lord comes."

A gentleman in Louisiana writes: "I do hope that the *Prophetic Times* will be continued. I have been profited and comforted much by it. I do not know of a number that I could consent to have missed. It ought to be continued and sustained. The time is evidently short. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. God's judgments upon a wicked world are about to descend. The people are to be warned; and the duty is upon those who comprehend the times to give that warning, whether men will hear or forbear, and to proclaim the coming kingdom with all earnestness. God's children also need to be comforted, and exhorted to patience in waiting, and so much the more as we see the day approaching."

Another friend says: "I trust you will still be comforted and encouraged to continue the serial until the taking away of the saints into glory, or until you shall be called away from this transitory scene. I have truly sympathized with you in your work. I am as sure that the Lord will return, personally, to reign very soon, as I am that my own sins were put away in His death upon the cross eighteen hundred years ago. Trusting that you will be supported in your great and good work of witness and testimony in these dark and evil days, I am," &c.

Many letters come to us with such statements as these: "A little more than a year ago I sent for your monthly. It has edified and instructed me in many things." "I am a constant reader of your excellent journal. It has intensely interested me in the study of prophecy." "Your periodical, devoted to observation and reflection, serves to confirm right opinions, as well as to correct erroneous ones." "I find that I cannot afford to do without the *Prophetic Times*. I take other Advent papers, but none instruct me as your serial does, and scarcely any others are orthodox on points which enter into the body of common Christian doctrine. It is a trick of Satan, in his hatred of the doctrine of Christ's speedy return, to connect it with all sorts of heresies, to render it poisonous, or to bring it into disrepute. You have kept your pages clear of these dangerous and wicked isms, and give us the truth on the great theme, without corrupt interminglings of falsehood and denials of the settled things of the Church's faith." "You fill an important place in the periodical literature of the day. Your themes, and the ability with which you handle them, are exerting an influence which is salutary and very greatly needed." "I feel truly that we need a reliable, solid, dignified, and frequent monitor like the *Prophetic Times*. We are rounding the corner into an unparalleled crisis; and testimony must not be wanting. Yours is a great, a high, a noble calling."

Is there any truth in these and such like representations, many more of which might be given? What, then, are we, that we should withstand what would seem to be the will of God, that our efforts should be continued yet another year at least? A few persons have suggested, that we have given our testimony faithfully in these past seven years, and that we might now reasonably resign what has been such an extra tax upon our time and energies. But, so earnest is the plea for continuance, and so overwhelming is the majority of those who unite in it, that we have resolved, by the help of God, upon one year more, leaving it to future developments and circumstances to determine what will then be done.

One thing is certain, that these seven years of observation and close attention to the subject, have not one whit abated the convictions

Digitized by Google

with which we commenced this publication. Frequent reviews of the scripturalness of our doctrines, new and repeated attempts to show that we do not read God's word aright, and opportunities to judge more deliberately of the characteristics and tendencies of our days, have served to settle and fix our persuasion that our doctrines are the doctrines of Christ, his apostles and prophets, and that we are in the last days of "the times of the Gentiles." It is not heat of imagination—not morbid fancy—not tumid idiosyncrasy—not fanatical feeling—not hasty and unconsidered wish to be singular—that we have spoken and written with reference to these things. It would be greatly more agreeable to our convenience not to trouble ourselves or others with these generally unwelcome subjects. Neither do we find ourselves charged with lack of judgment, capacity, reasonableness, or right appreciation of things, in other matters. We have ministerial and numerous public relations, apart from our prophetic studies, and no one has ventured to pronounce upon us as given to vagaries, or with incompetency and deficiency in mental balance and sober practical sense in any of these positions. Men of good discernment and piety have not hesitated freely to intrust us with many responsible administrations, of almost every shade and variety, up to the very highest in the Church of Christ. Again and again, after repeated trials, when we have come to lay down such trusts, those who are looked to as sober and wise, have renewed them, and pressed upon us many of the most difficult and responsible of duties. In all these instances we have acted on no other principles, and followed no other guides than those which we have taken with us into the investigation of God's purposes of the future. If we have any intelligence and discreetness in other departments, we have tried to be still more sober and discreet in undertaking to affirm as God's truth what so many good and sensible people have been disposed to regard as fabulous and apocryphal. And now, that we have given so much careful attention to the subject, and reviewed and re-reviewed our whole ground, with every wish to ascertain what the truth is, and been only the more confirmed with every new examination and new development in human affairs, we hardly think that it is a rational disposition of the subject to set it aside with a smile, saying, that every man must have his hobby, and that this is ours. At any rate, if these mighty doctrines concerning what God hath said He is about to bring to pass in the earth, constitute a "*hobby*," it is one very like that which John the Baptizer rode, and very near akin to some of those Apocalyptic horses, whose necks are clothed with thunder, the glory of whose nostrils is terrible, who turn not back from sword or spear, who say among the trumpets, ha, ha, and at the trampling of whose hoofs the earth and the heavens are to shake.

We may be in error in some things. No human interpretations or judgments are infallible. But it does not follow that we have erred because all men are liable to err. We have nothing to take back. We honestly believe that we have and represent the truth of God. Nor are we more likely to be mistaken than those who have not thought it worth while to give the subject their serious and honest attention for ten hours in their lives. And, until objectors and fault-finders will condescend to give us solid scriptural reasons for changing our convictions, they must excuse us for insisting, with inspired apostles and their followers, that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh; that He that is to come, will come, and will not tarry; that we are now in the last days of this age; that wonders of judgment, and even the great consummation, are at hand, and before our doors; and that if men will not take warning, watch, and hold themselves in daily readiness to meet the Lord in the air, they will presently have to lament and bemoan their folly amid the bitterness of the great tribulation.

With our present light and persuasions, therefore, we can do no better than go on, relying upon God and his plain word, and beseeching our friends and co-laborers to pray for us, and to help us as they can in the work which, by no seeking of ours, has fallen upon our hands. From our subscribers, especially, we expect promptness, as upon them we must depend for the means to go on with our issues.

Digitized by Google

THE

PROPHETIC TIMES.

A Monthly Serial

OF

SACRED LITERATURE AND CURRENT EVENTS,
TOUCHING THE COMING AND KINGDOM OF THE LORD JESUS
AND RELATED SUBJECTS.

EDITED BY

REV. DRS. SEISS, NEWTON, AND OTHERS.

VOL. VIII.

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."—2 Tim. 3 : 1–5.

P. O. Box 2245.
PHILADELPHIA:
SHERMAN & CO., PRINTERS.
1870.

Digitized by Google

"Behold, I come quickly."

REV. 22 : 12.

"LISTEN to the warning cry! The Judgment is near at hand; and no one of you knows whether the angel of judgment is not even now standing behind him with uplifted sword. What, then, is to be done? We must give heed to the signs of the coming of the Son of man, not as a matter of idle curiosity, in order to be able to calculate the world's history beforehand, but that we may know how it stands with us, and may be brought into the true position in regard to the Saviour; that, as wise virgins whose lamps are trimmed, we may at midnight-hour hear with joy the cry, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!"—W. HOFFMAN, D.D., *Chaplain in Ordinary to the King of Prussia.*

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

REV. 22 : 20.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS OF VOLUME VIII.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

	PAGE
Christ and the World,	1
The Royal Marriage Festival,	4
Paul's Untimely Birth,	7
Athanasius, &c. (Poetry),	9
The Creation of Woman,	17
Restitution of Rational Creation,	22
More about our Times,	26
Little Children and Christ's Coming,	33
The Preaching of the Gospel,	35
Significant Acknowledgments,	36
Watching (Poetry),	36
The Cherubim,	49
Caution, &c.,	51
The Church to her absent Lord (Poetry),	55
The Trinity of Evil,	65
"Even so, come, Lord Jesus,"	70
The Seraphim,	81
Preserved Blameless,	85
Earthly and Heavenly,	88
Wheat and Tares (Poetry),	89
Joshua a Type of Christ,	113
Restitution of Living Men.	115
Dead Nations, &c. (Poetry),	118
Restoration and Conversion of Israel,	129
"Come, Lord Jesus,"	133
Prophetic Time,	145
Shining as the Sun,	150
Coming Suddenly,	153
The End is Near (Poetry),	154
Prophetic Times,	177
Israel (Poetry),	184

SELECTIONS.

	PAGE
The Warning Message,	10
Who is the King of Glory?	37
The Sin of Witchcraft,	38
The Saviour's Coming,	40
Melancthon on End of the World,	55
Is it a Whim?	56
The Advent Doctrine,	57
Closing Hours of Time,	71
Foolhardiness,	72
The Last Time,	89
Napoleon and the Plebiscitum,	91
Watch and Pray,	92
The Conqueror's Reward.	93
Apostolic Doctrine,	119
What is the Use?	121
Abel and Enoch,	137
How to lead a Spiritual Life,	139
Fanaticism and Infidelity, &c.,	155
The Lord's Prayer,	156
Church's Hope in the Evil Day,	164
The Time is Short,	168
The Signals Thicken,	168
Waiting for the Lord.	185
Amen; Alleluia.	190
Be Ready,	194

Digitized by Google

EDITORIAL.

	PAGE		PAGE
Bible Chronology and 1870,	12	Vengeance and Reward,	105
We shall be Satisfied,	13	"Deliver us from Evil,"	108
The Order and Time,	29	"The Prophetic Key,"	112
The Sheep and the Goats,	43	The Treasures of Hail,	122
Science at Fault Again,	44	Scraps and Items,	127
Pere Hyacinthe on Prophecy,	46	Ancient Prayers,	128
The Angel Trumpeters,	47	Thoughts on Heaven,	141
The Translation,	58	The Last Alternative,	169
The Dichotomy,	74	War and the 19th Century,	173
Notes and Notices,	78	The Jews,	175
Casting Down of Satan,	80	A Word about Union,	176
Counsel for Evil Times,	96	The Uncrowning of Kings,	191
The Coming One,	101	The End,	192

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VIII. JANUARY, 1870. No. 1.

Special Contributions.

CHRIST AND THE WORLD.

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."—JOHN 17:14.

WHEREVER the Christian character comes to maturity, there exists between it and the world antagonism. The world and the church, using the word in its true significance, bear to each other the same relation that exists between the flesh and the Spirit. Unquestionably the prime motive that actuated the Deity in the creation of the material universe and all spiritual and intellectual existences, was, that He might be known; and being known be adored. To display the divine perfections, and to manifest the glory of His infinite attributes, moved God to reveal Himself as Creator. The happiness that was to accrue to the intelligences thus called into being, although a motive possessing vast weight in the mind of the Infinite, was not of itself the dominant purpose: to augment and display the Divine glory was, "Thou art worthy O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for THY PLEASURE they are and were created." Doth not the same design inspire God in His redemption work? "The heavens" do truly "declare the glory of God," but not the graces that shine resplendent in the life of Christ. Why did the Omniscient permit the conception and development of SIN, were it not that thereby His glory might be enhanced through the revelation of Himself as a sufferer* and a sacrifice? O that we may indeed rejoice in "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." God has glorified *Himself* as Lawgiver, Priest, and King: as Jesus Christ the Saviour. God has ever had two grand results in view, in all the dispensations: the unfolding of His character to man, and the revelation to man of humanity—humanity as it is; not as it left the creative hand of God. The law discovers to us the latter; humanity in ruins: the Gospel the former in all its glory; "the Word made flesh; the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." God then has already been revealed as a man among men, and has exhibited (to the end that we may wonder and adore) all the passive graces that adorn the life of Christ. "GOD was in Christ." But it was not the purpose of the Father that this manifestation of Himself should cease with the earthly life of Jesus, or that he should be known among men only as He is revealed in the sacred oracles. The world must not be left to such conceptions of His character as the unrenewed mind would form from the perusal of a mere historic record, or the contemplation of doctrines and precepts exacting faith and obedience. Though as it regarded his person absent, He desired to continue a living power in the earth. Hence the calling and establishment of the Church; that the

* The above thoughts I have seen elaborated in a work I read a number of years ago. Its name I have forgotten.—W. R. P.

Digitized by Google

Christ-life might still be manifested, Divine truth be declared, and the purposes of God accomplished.

The antagonism that exists between Christ and the world was made manifest in the treatment Christ received at the hands of the world. In Him we behold holiness warring against sin; *love* and truth the weapons of his warfare; suffering the condition of His life. Against this holiness, which testified to the world that the works thereof were evil, we see sin employing the weapons of violence and hate, to drive the Creator from a world He was come to redeem. The principle that warred against Christ, pursuing him unto death, is declared by Christ to be inherent to humanity, and will, He asserts, disclose itself wherever the Christ-life is evidently manifested. "The time cometh when whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." Wherefore? In order to drive again from the earth, Christ who dwelleth in them. God having glorified Himself as Creator, and in Christ Jesus as Redeemer, doth now dwell and walk in the earth as the Sanctifier. Herein is the Divine condescension wondrously revealed. It is not the office of the Divine Spirit to "speak of Himself," but to "testify of Christ." But hath not God wrought gloriously in the person of the Holy Ghost. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" The church is then the representative of Christ; the exponent of His truth, the living impersonation of His precepts; His witness in the world, and His agent for the calling out of an elect people. To this glory is the church called, but she attains only in proportion to the purity of her faith, and as she "receives Christ Jesus the Lord," in whom alone is all her strength. Were therefore the church true to her calling, she would receive as her heritage the persecution that "all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer" and be honored with the hatred that the world cannot fail to exhibit towards Him who hath pronounced it under condemnation. Thus the distinctiveness of the church is clearly asserted in Scripture, and the perpetual antagonism of the world expressly declared; for "whosoever will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God." But it has ever been the aim of the church, (as it exists visibly) to unite the two. The Romish hierarchy is truly the master-piece herein. But among the denominations of Protestantism has not public opinion, the opinion that governs and sways the theologic world, an infallibility equal with that of Rome? And are there not instances on record, not of remote date, where the faith of the churches although based upon a scriptural foundation, has been superseded by opinions forced upon them by the world? the church thus declining to endure persecution for the truth's sake. Yea, "the faith once delivered to the saints" is even now daily being undermined by the labors of those who advocate erroneous systems or a false philanthropy, and by "the oppositions of science, falsely so called."

To those who seek diligently, renouncing all, the Divine Spirit may be known inwardly as a personality. It is His office to glorify Christ, enlighten the soul, hallow the heart. The doctrines and commands of Christ are by Him made luminous, and capacity to receive and walk therein imparted. But these commands are not addressed to *the flesh*, nor can they by the flesh be truly received or really obeyed. "The new man, created in righteousness and true holiness," through the power of the indwelling Spirit, alone is capable. And just here lies the reason why the church has failed to manifest Christ, and why the world abhors Christ. Had Christ enjoined anything that *the flesh* has power to do, verily it had been done, and the world converted even now. But renunciation of the flesh and the works thereof is the condition of discipleship, and a "participation in the Divine nature," the concomitant heavenly gift. "Without ME ye can do nothing." Art, science, philosophy, legislation, and arms, are the forces that the world employs; and God may in His providences use any or all of these for the furtherance of the truth; but "the preaching of the cross" in the utterance of the Spirit is alone "the power of God and the wisdom of God," although to

Digitized by Google

the world it be weakness and foolishness. And because the world is thus rejected and declared under condemnation, it will one day arise in its might to blot from existence the people and the worship of Jesus Christ. And a false god shall be acknowledged and enthroned, "and all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world." But why does the history of the church appear to falsify the Scripture of our text? One reason is that multitudes have in every age united themselves by profession, while inwardly unrenewed. Chiefly this: an unwillingness to follow the leadings, and accept the teachings of the Spirit of God. The great doctrine that of itself suffices to separate from the world, and which is a true incentive to holiness, the doctrine of an impending personal advent has been denied. In its place, a fable, the device of men is established. But if the conversion of the world and the millennial glory are events antecedent to the coming of Christ, to be wrought through the agency of existing instrumentalities, manifestly it is the part of wisdom to seek and obtain secular authority in order to facilitate these events. Thus the avenues to political preferment are opened that the Church may assume the legislation of the world, and military power becomes an agent by which the Kingdom of Christ is advanced. Again, the accumulation of wealth becomes desirable in order that greater good may be accomplished, and the sphere of usefulness enlarged. But such a course subverts one of the chief purposes for which the Church was established; namely, to warn the Gentile powers of approaching judgments, preceded by an universal apostacy which will render the personal manifestation of Christ a necessity. Moreover it causes antagonism to the true Christ to cease, He being no longer manifested, and His purposes no longer declared; because His representative is exhibited, although a spiritual power, in competition with the world powers for the attainment of authority and wealth; whether existing as ecclesiastical bodies in alliance with the state, or whether as the collective members of the dissenting denominations of Protestantism. For Protestantism is not unwilling to ally itself with the state, but is hindered by its many divisions, while Rome remains ever an unity. Thus the faithful testimony that the world and the flesh are alike under condemnation is made void; for power and wealth, those elements that the world values above all, are, when premillennial truth is denied legitimate objects of pursuit on the part of the Church.

Our text had been literally true of the Church of to-day, had the Church of the past retained and transmitted the apostolic faith. That faith declares us although by nature the children of wrath, yet redeemed by the precious blood of Christ and heirs to an incorruptible inheritance, and consequently walking as strangers and pilgrims on the earth; dead already, as it regards sin, but alive unto God; not laying up treasures upon earth where moth and rust do corrupt, but seeking the things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. To what exalted glory is the Christian called. Concerning the world, that all therein is not of the Father, and that the flesh *cannot* please God.

Were therefore the church a body having its citizenship in Heaven and looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ; subject and tributary to all world powers, but wholly distinct from them; bearing testimony to the world's condemnation, while exhibiting before it the life of Christ; declaring the approaching dissolution of Gentile lordship, while she proclaimed the advancing millennial kingdom; refusing all worldly honor for a fellowship in the rejection and sufferings of Christ; preaching the gospel to every creature, while reproving the wickedness of the age; enduring a voluntary poverty resulting from practical sympathy with the afflictions of the destitute; dealing with all in grace, because the present is a dispensation of grace; hence refusing to bear arms, because not of the world, and through obedience to the precepts of Christ, which enjoin passive endurance during the period of his absence; not accepting political preferment

Digitized by Google

because the subjects of a spiritual and heavenly kingdom; also exemplifying holiness because partakers of the divine nature; were this indeed the attitude of the church, how mighty would be her influence, how evident that her calling was heavenly, and how apparent that she was "not of the world;" how would Christ be manifested, and how would God be glorified. But how little has the glory of God been the animating motive in the history of the past.

How little has been done to manifest the character of God by a living exhibition of the Christ-life. The noblest sentiment that seems to have inspired men in general professing Christ, has been a desire to save the perishing; to rescue them "from the wrath to come;" a noble purpose, and acceptable with God: but an entire surrender of heart, life, and will; a consecration of all the powers, that God may use man for *His own* glory, in accordance with the dictates of *His own* wisdom, has not been made. But in the place of this interior life by which alone can Christ be manifested during the period of His absence, behold what disputations about externals; what a resting in the letter, forgetting that "the law is spiritual;" and what weighing of heavenly mysteries in the balance of natural reason.

In conclusion, God is glorified by our contrast to the world. This contrast is at once its condemnation and incentive to hostility. Satan is "the prince of this world," between whom and Christ there can never exist aught but enmity. Hence he will ever seek to destroy by prosperity, deceit, or violence; he will never see his empire subverted and continue passive. If antagonism has ceased, it is that vital truths are rejected, and the power of a holy life is no longer visible except as it exists in isolation.

Is not this in accordance with prophetic Scripture? Truly we have not to look far ere we find the daughters of Babylon.

When antagonism ceases, God ceases to be manifested.

W. R. P.

THE ROYAL MARRIAGE FESTIVAL.

MATTHEW 22: 1–14.

THE blessed Saviour uttered many parables illustrative of His kingdom. There is also a gradation in them, from things in this world to things in the world to come. And it is only by taking them as a whole, that we can form a correct picture of what that kingdom is, and will be. The terms "*Kingdom of God*," and "*Kingdom of Heaven*," are frequently employed in the New Testament, and are generally intended to denote the reign of the Lord Jesus, either by His Spirit, or in person. The same idea is implied in many expressions of the Old Testament in which the reign and triumphs of Messiah are denoted by the terms "*His Kingdom*" "*Thy Kingdom*," "*My Kingdom*," &c.

It is called "*the Kingdom of Heaven*," to distinguish it from earthly empires or confederations. Hence the Saviour said to Pilate, when on trial for his life, "*My Kingdom is not* (εκ) *from this world*." He meant by this that His kingdom was to be set up by supernatural means. It is not "*from this world*," but from Heaven. Its King is heavenly. Its subjects are born from on high, and have a celestial citizenship.

But this kingdom is not yet finally established. Christ now reigns by His Spirit in the hearts of His people, but He has not yet taken to Himself His great ultimate dominion over the nations.

There is a sense, in which the church *is* "the Kingdom of Heaven." As such it is a *mixed* kingdom, composed of good and bad. This is represented by the parables of the Wheat and the Tares—the Mustard Seed—the Leaven—the Drag net—(Matt. 13), and other parables of a similar import, in which the Saviour presents, not only the mixed, but also the *corrupt* condition of the world until He comes. These different parables represent different parts, or stages, in the formation of the kingdom.

This kingdom, when fully established, like all other kingdoms, will be composed of different classes and grades of persons. There will be first, the King Himself, which all admit will be the Lord Jesus Christ. He will have

Digitized by Google

His ministers, who shall be partakers with Him in the administration of His government. To his apostles he said, "When the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, *ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*" (Matt. 19:28.) Some shall sit on His right hand, and some on His left hand —some shall be rulers over ten cities, and some over five cities. (Luke 19:11, 27.) There will be gradations in all the appointments of the King. And so also there will be degrees of glory and honor among the subjects of that kingdom. Paul says, some shall shine as the sun, and some as the moon, and some as the stars. And that there are some stars of greater magnitude than others. (1 Cor. 15:41, 42.) Every man shall there receive according as his work, or preparation has been, in proportion of an hundred fold, for all his suffering, toil, and self-denial for Christ.

But, there will also be other classes in the Kingdom of Heaven. The King will have a *Bride.* In the Apocalypse it is said, "The *marriage* of the Lamb is come; and his *wife* hath made herself ready." "Blessed are they which are called to the *marriage* supper of the Lamb." One of the seven angels said to John, "Come hither, I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife." And this Bride is then described to be the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem. (Rev. 22.)

This Bride of the King will be the church proper, and embrace those only who have been most pure, and undefiled, and worthy of their high calling, gathered during the different dispensations. (Rev. 14:1–5.)

The great marriage festival will be kept *with closed doors*, into which none will be admitted, but those invited and fully prepared. This is shown most clearly in the parable of the *ten virgins*, which represents the marriage of the King's son. For when the five foolish virgins went to buy the necessary oil, "the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the *marriage.*" And when they came, *the door was shut*, and they knocked in vain for admission. There is particular preparation and qualification necessary to be even a *guest* at the marriage of the King's Son.

And it is to this marriage scene that this interesting parable refers, and the invitation to which it explains. Look now at man's conduct under the gospel and its invitations.

The servants were first sent "to call them that were bidden to the wedding." This refers to the Jews. They were for ages the chosen people of God, "to whom partaineth the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever." (Rom. 9:4, 5.) But the manner in which they received the invitation is given in a few words, "*and they would not come.*" Christ "came to His own, and His own received Him not."

But God was reluctant to give them up. Hence "Again, He sent forth other servants, saying, tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen, and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage." But "*they made light of it,*" and "went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: and the remnant took His servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them." This contempt and ill-treatment of His servants, the King regarded as a personal insult. What they did to His servants, He regarded as done to Himself. And "when He heard thereof, He was wroth: and He sent forth His armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city." The wedding was ready, the invitation had been freely given, and acceptance was urged upon them, but it was deliberately rejected, and for this rejection their city was destroyed, and they given over to the scathing judgments of God, and made a byword and a reproach among all people. But the gracious invitation they rejected, has now been extended to the Gentiles. For the King said to His servants, "The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage."

This is now the commission of every true minister of the Gospel, to call men to the marriage festival—to cry into the ears of men everywhere "*all things are ready; come unto the mar-*

Digitized by Google

riage." The oxen and fatlings are killed, the dinner is prepared, and all that is needed is the presence of the requisite number of guests. This number will soon be complete, and then the marriage will be celebrated.

The object of all God's dealings is to gather out, and prepare a people for Himself, some for the Bride of His Son, and some to be guests at that royal festival. This has been the aim from the beginning, and will continue to be until the number is made up.

To be a guest at this marriage requires particular preparation and qualification. What the Saviour here says of those to whom the invitation was first given, is still true of the great mass of people to whom it has since been given, and will be true to the end. They still "make light of it, and go their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise, and the remnant take His servants and entreat them spitefully and slay them." And the nearer we approach the end the more so will this be the case. For the Saviour says, of that time, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." (Matt. 24 : 12.)

When we tell people that the day of the Lord is at hand—the marriage of the King's son is near, and for this "all things are ready: come to the marriage"—"the Judge is at the door"—"Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him"—many will treat this message with contempt, and persecute him who delivers it. They love their merchandise and worldly gains far more than the promise of the royal marriage feast. They would rather engage in worldly affairs than listen to such words from God. They make light of the invitation to heaven's honors and blessedness.

There is no truth more unpopular and distasteful to the great mass of hearers, or that will sooner bring down upon a faithful minister the neglect, and hatred, and persecution of many persons, than to urge upon them the necessity of immediate preparation for the marriage supper of the Lamb, and the truths connected with the speedy personal coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But let no one deceive himself; such conduct will have its reward. God will not be mocked. He will not long suffer man to contemn, what He has bought so dearly, and offered so freely. And it cannot be otherwise, but that all those who treat contemptuously the invitation to the marriage of God's Son, shall suffer for it—suffer loss. This is shown in the solemn inspection which is to take place at the time of the great festival. And Christ says, "Many will say to me at that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" (Matt. 7 : 22.) But to all who have not prepared themselves for that marriage, the cutting question will be: "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment?"

Here is a *personal* scrutiny, of each one individually. God looks into each heart. "The wedding garment of my friend—my father—my brother—will not avail for me. That robe must cover my own immortal spirit. Though I had patriarchs and martyrs, apostles and saints for my ancestors" it will not screen me. My own thoughts, and words, and actions—my own state here, will decide my destiny then.

And each one is put upon his own defence. "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?" You should have known what was required to apppear as a guest at this festival? "*How camest thou in hither?*" What answer can you make for such gross neglect of plain and positive requirements?

No answer could be made. "*He was speechless!*"

"TAKE HIM AWAY!" says the King. "*Take him away*" from the feast of royal pleasures. "*Take him away!*" and "*cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* For many are called, but few are chosen."

All under the Gospel are called. You, dear reader, are called. I am called. The call is now again made to your soul. But will you be among the chosen guests at this royal festival?

J. F. F.

Digitized by Google

PAUL'S UNTIMELY BIRTH.

OBSERVATIONS ON 1 COR. 8 : 15.

THE Apostle Paul, when enumerating the many persons who had seen Christ after His resurrection, winds up by saying, "and last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." There is a difference of opinion among commentators and others respecting the meaning of the last clause of this verse, and the writer of this paper has never been able to satisfy his mind with the remarks of any of the expositors that have come under his notice. If we refer to the passage in the original, we shall find that the Greek word used by the Apostle, and which our translators explain by the words "born out of due time," means, literally, born *prematurely*;—out of due time certainly;—but, still, *before* the time, and not *after* it. All translators and commentators agree in restricting the word to this literal meaning.

Without further considering this point at present, I proceed to observe that had the Apostle intended only to state that *he* was one of the many witnesses then alive who had seen Christ after His resurrection, and the last person to whom He had appeared, it was not necessary for him to have added the latter part of the verse, as it has no bearing whatever upon the question. Whether he was, or was not, "one born out of due time" (whatever meaning, as relates to the time of his *natural* birth, we may be disposed to give this expression), could have nothing to do with the fact he asserts, namely, that Christ had appeared to him after His resurrection. But as it seemed good to the Apostle to add, "as of one born *prematurely*" (or, as we have it, "out of due time"), we naturally desire to know what he means by saying so. That the remark has some important meaning we cannot doubt.

Did he mean that the *time* of His natural birth was so long *before*, or so long *after* that of the other witnesses to Christ's resurrection that the appearance of Christ to *him*, as compared with his apperances to them, was "as to one born out of due time."

He cannot mean *this*, certainly; as all the original disciples, save Judas, and very many of the other witnesses of Christ's resurrection were alive at the time he wrote Peter may have been then his senior in years, John his junior; but as the greater part of the five hundred brethren were remaining "at that day," it is not unreasonable to suppose that *many* were about of the same age as himself.

In fact, Saul of Tarsus was contemporary with all the other witnesses, and there was nothing in point of time, to have prevented him from seeing Christ (as we may suppose many of the other witnesses did), both before His crucifixion, and after His resurrection. It follows, therefore, that the Apostle cannot be speaking of His *natural* birth, and we are left to find some other meaning for his words. And if the reference be not to the time of His natural birth, it can only be to the time of His spiritual birth into the Christian life, *i. e.*, to the time of His conversion;—there are none other births than these two.

Let us see then why the Apostle should say he was "as one born out of due time" (*prematurely*), as regards his spiritual birth. It is certain that had Saul of Tarsus been a private man, and been converted by the silent influences of the Holy Spirit on his way from Jerusalem to Damascus, he could not have said with any propriety that his birth into the Christian life was premature, or out of due time. It could no more be said of *his* conversion under these circumstances, than it could be said of the conversion of any other sinner from the foundation of the world to the present day. *No* conversion happening in the natural way (if I may be allowed the expression), can with any propriety be called premature, or out of due time.

Has God fixed a day or hour in which an *individual* may be converted, so that in case he be converted before or after it, he may be said to have been converted "out of due time?" It is not so written. And if God by His determinate counsel and foreknowledge had set apart a certain day or hour for the conversion of any man, he could not by any possibility be converted on any other day or hour, before or after, and, consequently, never "out of due time."

But what say the Scriptures? "Now" (this very moment, any moment that we can call

Digitized by Google

now) "is the accepted time;" "to-day" (any *present* day of our lives) "is the day of salvation." With God *all* time—past, present, and to come—is one eternal now; and as any moment of our existence is the "due time" for our conversion, it cannot be said with propriety (in this sense), that any one can be converted, *i. e.*, born into the Christian life, "*out of* due time." But God *has fixed a time* for the conversion of the whole Jewish people. A nation shall be born in a day. When He shall have gathered them once more into their own land, they shall see the Lord of Life and Glory coming without sin unto salvation, "and" (then) "all Israel shall be saved;"—suddenly and miraculously converted!

Saul of Tarsus was converted in this miraculous manner; and he is the only person thus far, that has been so converted. Let us consider then if there was anything in the manner of his miraculous conversion that prompted him to say he was "as one born out of due time."

No careful reader of the Scriptures can, as I think, fail to see that the means provided by God for the conversion of the Gentiles is the preaching of the Gospel; and for the conversion of the Jews, as a people, the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ at His second advent.

This same Apostle, writing of the Gentiles, (Romans 10: 14, &c.) says, "How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" evidently implying that the appointed means for the conversion of the Gentiles was the preaching of the Gospel. In the succeeding verses he speaks of the Jews. "I say" (he asks) "have *they* not heard?" "Did *Israel* not know?" "Yea, verily." "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." *They* were to be converted only by miracle. As they were miraculously brought into the promised land, so shall they be miraculously brought into "the rest that remaineth for the people of God." It is not to be denied that many of the Jews were converted by the preaching of the Gospel in the time of the Apostles, and that the Church of Christ, in the beginning, was composed almost exclusively of converts from that people; but it is also true that, as a people, they continue to reject the Gospel of Christ as malignantly as they rejected the Divine author when they clamored for his crucifixion.

With sincere sorrow we Christians are compelled to acknowledge that, to the Jews of the present day, the words of Stephen are as applicable as they were to their forefathers in his time: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." Let us ask, how many Jews have been converted to Christianity by the preaching of the Gospel since the time of the Apostles compared with the many myriads of Gentiles who have, during that period, been converted by that means—and how many converted Jews are at this day to be found in the body of the Christian Church? Nothing but the irresistable power of Almighty God miraculously exercised can crush out of the Jewish heart its malignant hatred to Christianity.

Cornelius the Centurion was the representative man of the Gentiles. Peter preached Jesus of Nazareth to him and his companions, that "through His name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins;" and while he yet spake, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the sound.

They were converted by the preaching of the Gospel; and it is the only means used to the present day for the conversion of that people. But the clearly revealed purpose of God is to accomplish the sudden and general conversion of the Jews by miraculous means. Saul of Tarsus is the representative man of the Jewish people. He was suddenly and miraculously converted by the appearance to him of our Lord Jesus Christ; and in *his sudden* conversion we have a representation of the manner in which the whole Jewish people shall be instantly and miraculously converted at the second coming of our Lord. He was, in the manner of his conversion, "set forth *for a pattern* to them which should hereafter believe in Christ to life everlasting." (Tim. 1: 16.) But as this conversion of the Jewish people is

Digitized by Google

not to take place until they are restored to their own land, the Apostle says of his conversion, "*I am as one born out of due time*"—*i. e., before the time.*

Saul of Tarsus was not a representative of the Jewish people only as regards the manner of his conversion. He was at that time *de facto* and *de jure*, their accredited representative in ecclesiastical matters, being duly commissioned, and carrying with him letters to that effect issued by the high priest in the name of the whole sanhedrim, of which Gamaliel, his master, was then the head—a minister plenipotentiary with unlimited power. And well did he represent the spirit of his people, as he "breathed out threatenings and and slaughter" against the disciples of the Lord, and "made havoc of the church." ["In every country where there were Jews and synagogues, the power and authority of the sanhedrim and high priest were acknowledged, just as Papists in all countries acknowledged the authority of the Pope."]

Let us remember that this Saul of Tarsus "was not a man of light, fickle, and uncultivated mind. His natural powers were vast, his character the most decided, and his education the most profound. Though a Jew, it is evident that his education was not confined to matters that concerned his own people and country alone. He was evidently master of the three great languages which were spoken among the only people who deserved the name of nations—the Hebrew and its prevailing dialect, the Chaldaic—Syriac; the Greek, and the Latin. He had read the best Greek writers, as his style, allusions, and quotations sufficiently prove. In matters which concern his own religion he was instructed by Gamaliel, one of the most celebrated doctors the synagogue had ever produced." We can well believe that no man in his day was more familiar with the writings of the Old Testament, or more capable of understanding them. As a Jew and as a Christian he had studied them with the most profound attention, and could not be ignorant of the meaning of the many prophecies relating to the return of the Jews to their own land, and their being there converted, instantly and miraculously, by the personal appearance of their Messiah and King.

This purpose of God was clearly revealed to him in the books of the Old Testament, and with the additional revelations he, doubtless, received directly from Christ himself. In relation to this subject we cannot hesitate to believe that he knew more respecting it than any other man that ever lived.

He has written more largely and luminously upon it than any other of the New Testament writers, and from what he has written I feel confident that he believed the conversion of the Jews, as a people, was to take place at the time and in the manner stated above;—and it is impossible for me to avoid the conclusion that, when he says he was "as one born out out of due time," and "a pattern to (or of) them which should thereafter believe in Christ," he had reference to the time when his whole people return to their own land would be converted, as he had been, by the personal appearance of Christ.

In this sense, and in this sense only, can I understand how his birth into the Christian life was *premature*,—"out of due time," or how his conversion could be "a pattern" or representation of the conversion of those that should afterwards believe. J. J.

"ATHANASIUS AGAINST THE WORLD."

THE perilous times by holy seers foretold,
When godliness should be but a form;
When iniquity's waves should flow high and cold,
Chilling the germ of a love once warm,
Are now upon us. Like Athanasius,
In his sore conflict bold with heresy,
Tho' at the risk of martyrdom, even thus
Must Christians now alone God's Word obey,
Regardless of the face of mortal clay.

The world to hate, and brethren false to sneer!
How overwhelming is the awful thought!
But He who did that dauntless hero cheer,
And from his foes deliverance wrought,
Shall give *them* strength in this unequal strife—
The world in arms against His little flock—
Enabling them to freely offer life,
Tho' this same world in fury blind may mock,
And Satan's legions in their pathway stalk!

Digitized by Google

This prospect drear may mortal sight dismay—
For thick the veil upon our human eyes—
Nor Israel's flaming chariots send a ray
To scatter gloomy mists that round us rise.
But faith, supported by omnipotence,
Like Athanasius can brave the world,
And sees with confidence its own defense,
And all opposing strength to ruin hurled,
Whilst e'er Jehovah's banner is unfurled!

Can walk in dreary solitude alone,
Though nature for sweet sympathy may yearn;
Can see the dearest hopes of earth o'erthrown,
And all its evanescent treasures burn,
For God's own holy truth immutable.
Can see loved brethren turn away in scorn,
Nor shrink e'en from the captive's gloomy cell,
And feel 'twere better they had ne'er been born,
Than fail to wear with Christ the crown of thorn!

O, sweetly playful is the dalliance now
Between the world and those who bear Christ's name.—
Those who to Him allegiance did vow,
And with him suffer agony and shame,
Have followed Balaam's specious counsel wise,
And found how sweet are Moab's pleasures rare,
As syren songs seductive round them rise.
And shall Christ's little flock with them now dare
Corruption to embrace, tho' decked with flowers fair?

Like Him who trod the wine-press all alone,
"The world against us, we against the world,"
Tho' fellow Christians, kinsmen all disown,
And Satan's vengeful malice on us hurled;
Altho' they may misjudge us and malign,
May persecute us even unto death,
We must not be above our Lord divine,
And thus *He* yielded up His holy breath—
For thus the Sacred Scriptures to us saith.

Shall we e'en now the holy truth ignore,
And madly join the pleasure-seeking throng?
Forgetful that the Master said of yore,
That tribulations to this life belong?
Shall we be found with those who eat and drink,
Their fellow-servants smite with haughty scorn,
And as they revel on in pleasure think,
Their Lord will never to this earth return,
And cheat themselves with this poor hope forlorn?

What though these pleasures do seem innocent,
And lukewarm ones in anger us deride?
His word does say that it was never meant
God's child and Belial's should walk side by side.
Those diverse spirits cannot harmonize,
And futile the attempt them to unite,
Destruction only in his pathway lies,
Who God's own solemn admonitions slight,
Nor safety seek from Satan's wiles in flight.

O, brethren of the loved and little flock,
In sadness thus do we not stand alone!
Although our feet are on the changeless rock,
And from this height can n'er be overthrown;
Yet oft we long for loving sympathy,
And mourn for those to direful sorrow doomed.
But soon the King of Glory we shall see,
And all that causes sin by Him consumed,
Restored the light that once this earth illumed.

We know not what may be before us yet,
What tribulation suffer for His sake,
We know not how our sun of life may set,
In peaceful sleep, or at the burning stake.
We know not if we shall escape all these,
In triumph meet Him in the azure skies,
To find from all earth's woes a sweet release.
Enough to know the dreary darkness flies,
And glory's sun shall soon upon us rise!

Enough to know we only tread the path
Of sorrow, as our Blessed Master did,
Who drained even to the dregs the cup of wrath,
When God His face in darkness from Him hid.
We'll suffer all His will and wait in hope,
Tho' seeing every joy to ruin hurled,
And watch until the heavens bright shall ope.
The little flock must be against the world
Whilst e'er *its* prince's banner is unfurled!

Selections.

THE WARNING MESSAGE.

NOTHING is more clearly set forth in the history of the world than that God always sends forth a warning message before visiting the children of men with a judgment for their wickedness. This is consistent with His character—which is one of supreme love and justice—and with the principles upon which He deals with a fallen race. Before visiting a judgment of a universal extent upon a rebellious race, He

Digitized by Google

has commissioned and sent forth faithful servants to warn the people of the coming danger, and to point out the means of escape. Such is the history of God's judgments in the past.

A warning message has never been a popular one. This could not be in the nature of things; for the means of escape which are therein set forth require *submission* on the part of the guilty. For example, look at the antediluvian world. Their wickedness was so great that God regretted that he had made man, and issues a decree that he will destroy man from the face of the earth. But his great love for the race of man still prompts him to offer the guilty an opportunity to escape the threatened destruction. He commissions a man of holiness and faith to promulgate his decision. This warning message presented the nature of the danger, and plainly set the means of escape. The result was lamentable. The warning cry was scoffed at, and the remedy rejected. The message was unpopular; and the delusive tide of public opinion carried the human race down to destruction.

From this we learn that it is not always safe to be on the popular side—it is not safe to heedlessly run a great risk because the majority do.

Again, in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities of the Plain the same facts are apparent. After God had decided to destroy that rebellious people, He faithfully set before them the nature of the judgment and the means of escape. But this also was followed with the same result as in the other instance—only few were saved.

From numerous portions of the New Testament we learn that the *moral* condition of the world in the days of Noah and Lot was a type of the generation upon which the last great judgment should be visited, when the Son of man shall be revealed "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction."

In the days of Noah and Lot they did everything in utter disregard of God's warning: every imagination of the heart was only evil continually—"Even thus shall it be when the Son of man shall be revealed." No generation, it seems to us, could more perfectly fulfil this type than the present. The depravity of mankind is of a universal nature, pervading all climes, and all classes of society.

But Peter particularly speaks of these times when scoffers should abound; when the judgment message should be sounded forth to a godless world; for it was this message of the speedy return of the Lord of life and glory at which they were to scoff. No message has ever developed scoffers like this; and they will continue to scoff until they share the fate of the antediluvians.

Many are the signs and tokens which assure us that we are not mistaken in regard to our conclusion, that the speedy consummation of all things is at hand. Not only in human language is this warning found, but nature herself gives signs of a speedy change, such as was never indicated before. In the air and skies, on sea and land, there is a remarkable fitness to the prophetic word. These things are noticed by those who have eyes to see, and ears to hear. To such they bring no gloomy apprehension; for Jesus says, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

Again, the Scriptures show us that in the last times, in opposition to the warning message, there would be a "peace and safety" cry. There is one class who repudiate the message of Christ's coming, and say, "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation;" and this is reiterated by another class, who say, "My Lord delayeth his coming." Under the influence of this cry the popular church is "deceiving and being deceived," "having a *form* of godliness but denying the power thereof."

This peace cry is presented in numerous forms, among which are the mighty worldly achievements of the modern church—making large additions to its fold, of wealth, number, and influence, "being increased in goods and having need of nothing." Thus the modern shepherds comfort and deceive their flocks with

Digitized by Google

the Laodicean peace cry. But upon such will the Lord come "as a thief in the night."

In all ages when there has been a warning message proclaimed, there has been a peace cry which has deceived the masses. So in our day the world is again being deceived by the same cry, which is so pleasing and soothing to the ears of unregenerated human nature. Surely, the fearful pages of history should warn us against following the example of past generations. We may safely trust in the words of Jesus, "*Behold, I come quickly.*"

Editorial.

BIBLE CHRONOLOGY AND 1870.

We lay no great stress upon the arithmetic of prophecy; because the starting-points, as well as many of the integers of the calculations, lack in certainty. Nevertheless, we are quite impressed with the writing down of the year 1870, which we now begin.

It has been a very old, and a very widely accredited theory, that the world, of which Adam was the beginning, is to continue 6000 years in its secular, ailing and toiling condition; and that the seventh thousand is to be one of glorious sabbatic rest, ushered in by the winding up of this present age or dispensation. If there be real ground for this, it cannot but be very interesting to know how near we now are to the beginning of this seventh thousand years. The answer cannot be given with absolute certainty, but we give the following summary of the age of the world, as gathered from what appears in the Scriptures, filled out by the best that is known to man of the intervals not given in the Bible:

	YEARS.
From Adam's creation to the birth of Seth, Gen. 5 : 3,	130
From the birth of Seth to birth of Enos, Gen. 5 : 6,	105
From the birth of Enos to birth of Cainan, Gen. 5 . 9,	90
From birth of Cainan to birth of Mahalaleel, Gen. 5 : 12,	70
From birth of Mahalaleel to birth of Jared, Gen. 5 : 15,	65
From birth of Jared to birth of Enoch, Gen. 5 : 18,	162
From birth of Enoch to birth of Methuselah, Gen. 5 : 21,	65
From birth of Methuselah to birth of Lamech, Gen. 5 : 25,	187
From birth of Lamech to birth of Noah, Gen. 5 : 28,	182
From birth of Noah to the flood, Gen. 7 : 6,	600
Duration of the flood, Gen 8 : 13,	1
From the flood to birth of Arphaxad, Gen. 11 : 10,	2
From birth of Arphaxad to birth of Salah, Gen. 11 : 12,	35
From birth of Salah to birth of Eber, Gen. 11 : 14,	30
From birth of Eber to birth of Peleg, Gen. 11 : 16,	34
From birth of Peleg to birth of Reu, Gen. 11 : 18,	30
From birth of Reu to birth of Serug, Gen. 11 : 20,	32
From birth of Serug to birth of Nahor, Gen. 11 : 22,	30
From birth of Nahor to birth of Terah, Gen. 11 : 24,	29
From birth of Terah to his death, Gen. 11 : 32,	205
From death of Terah to covenant with Abraham, Acts 7 : 2–4; Gen. 12 : 4; 15 : 1–21,	2
From making of covenant to giving of the law, Gal. 3 : 17,	430
From giving of the law to return of the spies, Exodus 19 : 1; Numbers 10 : 11,	1
From return of the spies to apportioning of the land, Numbers 14; Joshua 14 : 10,	45
From apportionment of the land to Samuel, Acts 13 : 19, 20,	450
From Samuel to Saul's death, Acts 13 : 21,	40
From death of Saul to end of David's reign, Acts 13 : 22; 1 Kings 2 : 11,	40
From David to end of Solomon's reign, 2 Chron. 9 : 30,	40
From Solomon's death to end of Rehoboam's reign, 2 Chron. 12 : 13,	17

Digitized by Google

	YEARS.
From Rehoboam to end of Abijah's reign, 2 Chron. 13 : 1, 2,	3
From Abijah to death of King Asa, 2 Chron. 16 : 13,	41
From Asa to end of Jehosaphat's reign, 2 Chron. 20 : 31,	25
From Jehoshaphat to end of Jehoram's reign, 2 Chron. 21 : 20,	8
From Jehoram to end of Ahaziah's reign, 2 Chron. 22 : 2	1
From Ahaziah to end of Athaliah's usurpation, 2 Chron. 22 : 12,	6
From Athaliah to end of Joash's reign, 2 Chron. 24 : 1,	40
From Joash to end of Amaziah's reign, 2 Chron. 25 : 1,	29
From Amaziah to end of Uzziah's reign, 2 Chron. 26 : 1,	52
From Uzziah to end of Jotham's reign, 2 Chron. 27 : 1,	16
From Jotham to death of Ahaz, 2 Chron. 28 : 1,	16
From Ahaz to death of Hezekiah, 2 Chron. 29 : 1,	29
From Hezekiah to death of Manasseh, 2 Chron. 33 : 1,	55
From Manasseh to death of Amon, 2 Chron. 33 : 21,	2
From Amon to death of Josiah, 2 Chron. 34 : 1,	31
From Josiah to deposition of Jehoahaz, 2 Chron. 36 : 2,	00
From Jehoahaz to death of Jehoiachim, 2 Chron. 36 : 5,	11
From Jehoiachim to deposition of Jehoiachin, 2 Chron. 36 : 9,	00
From Jehoiachin to captivity under Zedekiah, 2 Chron. 36 : 11,	11
From beginning of captivity to decree of Cyrus, Jer. 25 : 11; 2 Chron. 36 : 22, 23,	70
From decree of Cyrus to birth of Christ, estimated by Ptolemy's Canon of Chaldean and Persian kings,	536
From the birth of Christ to the present, according to common reckoning,	1869
Total from Adam to end of 1869,	6000

We cannot vouch for the precise and unmistakable accuracy of these dates. We give them as they appear in the Bible, and the common reckoning. Our readers can judge of them as correctly as ourselves, having given them the texts to which to refer. Some other versions of the Scriptures give the ages of the patriarchs somewhat differently. We give the figures as they occur in our received Hebrew and English versions; and we know of no better. And our readers may well suppose, that it is not without a thrill that we begin to write 1870, seeing that from these figures, 1870 brings us to the commencement of the Seventh Thousand of the years since the present world began.

The great Luther, in his day, concluded his synopsis of the world's chronology with this quotation, to which Melancthon also often referred as worthy of serious consideration:

"Six thousand years the world shall stand.
Two thousand idle or unoccupied.
Two thousand the Law.
Two thousand the Messiah.
These are six days of a week before God.
The seventh is the continuous Sabbath.
Ps. 90 : 5; 2 Pet. 3 : 8.
To the Lord a thousand years are as one day."

WE SHALL BE SATISFIED.

I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness.—PSALM 17 : 15.

I. *Why are we dissatisfied?*

WHAT a glorious structure must this world have been as it originally came from the hands of the Creator. Its beauty even now so great, and its grandeur so stupendous, we can form no adequate conception as to its primal magnificence. Hers is still "the loveliness lingering around the dead;" and we feel awe-struck, as our imagination tries to picture its glory when vivified by the breath of God. Pronounced by infinite wisdom and perfection to be "very good," there could have been no flaw or imperfection to mar its exquisite beauty, and its adaptation to the needs of a holy and glorious race. Its dells, its brooks, its trees, its flowers yet have the witching spell of beauty upon them; and the grander works of nature, as exhibited in the sun, moon, stars, and lofty mountains, cause us to realize our own insignificance, and to form some faint idea of the perfection of their Creator. We almost feel, too, that were not our own natures blighted by the chill that has fallen upon all creation, we could be con.

Digitized by Google

tent to dwell forever under the soothing influence of these gladdening scenes. But ah! far more than inanimate nature, have we been infected by this blight. And yet there is the same evidence, too, of glory in our formation, though it be in ruins. Occasionally brilliant scintillations from the dark ruin evinced the Godlike nature of the original creation—fragments of which will sparkle through the sin-encased exterior.

One evidence is our dissatisfaction with our condition, and our writhings under it. "The *whole Creation* groans to be delivered," and the "sons of God" must have the redemption of their physical nature as well as their moral; they aspire to *perfection* in every part, and thus give token of their origin. This consciousness of creation for better things is intuitive; and is not only a consequence of our renovated nature, although this intuition only takes a definite and distinct form after we have been spiritually enlightened. And having this consciousness, we cannot be satisfied with the imperfection that adheres to our best efforts, our most useful pursuits, our most valuable attainments. We feel keenly the disorganization introduced by sin into the material creation, and the aspirations after perfection within us, cause us to long for renovation here. Fallen as we are, the cravings of our immortal nature cannot be satisfied with less than full perfection, and as our moral degradation and impotence are thoroughly understood, we loathe ourselves as keenly as Job ever did himself. We feel ourselves hopelessly under a dominion that we despise and abhor; and as our chains tighten around us with a tenacity that all the malevolence of our tyrant can apply, we indeed do groan and say, "O wretched man that I am!" We experience a loss of self-respect at our low abasement, and a despairing hopelessness at the impotence that cannot burst these galling fetters. The knowledge that there is no condemnation on account of our failures; and that Jesus is to effect the deliverance our weakness cannot accomplish, does not remove this feeling entirely. We are *relieved* to a certain extent, but we cannot be *satisfied* with our condition. We long for full purity, and our despondency at times is almost insupportable, at the consciousness that "sin is mixed with all we do." We are creatures of sense, and the certainty of effectual deliverance eventually, cannot always stifle the longings after the unattainable *here*, when we realize so keenly the taint in our natures from the evil effects within and without. We pant to be delivered, to be satisfied.

And then the afflictions, the sorrows, the death to which our mortal natures are suject, are all incompatible with a state of satisfaction. We cannot be satisfied when we feel the suffering from sickness, and we long for "the land where the inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick." We cannot feel satisfied when all the dreams and hopes of youth and love are buried in the dark tomb, and we are left to walk alone in sadness and grief down the gloomy and stormy path of life; but we long for that immortal land where all the heaven-born passions of the heart shall not be evanescent, but shall bloom in perennial beauty, beside the green pastures and still waters. We cannot feel satisfied when we see the widow oppressed, the orphan defrauded, iniquity of all kinds prevailing, and wrong of every description perpetrated by the powerful against the defenceless.

When we see ignorance, misery, sin, abounding in every direction; when we behold the mysterious inequalities existing between so many of the human race, and know that *we* cannot deplore these evils to the extent that God does, and yet see that He does not think it proper to interpose; when we realize that our own efforts for the good of our kind—both temporal and spiritual—are so feeble and so ineffectual; and that the preaching of the Gospel is attended with so little success, *in comparison* with our hopes and expectations, we long with unutterable intensity for Him who shall take the government upon His omnipotent shoulder, and shall rectify forever all these fearful abuses and evils. It is demonstrated beyond all contradiction, we think, that we cannot be satisfied *here*, whilst the Prince of this world is triumphant, and the plan of redemption incomplete.

II. *What will give us satisfaction?*

Nothing less than full restoration to what we

Digitized by Google

have lost,—that to which our soul so ardently aspires,—and perfect assimilation to His own glorious image. Anything less than this will not satisfy us. And we are promised a complete realization of these aspirations. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, in Thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15.) "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him."

The process of purification commences now, but it will not reach its culmination until we "awake," or until "He shall appear." These very desires and longings are part of the means to secure that result: for God ever has respect to the devout and insatiable wish of the heart, and to the language of pleading importunity. And to those who say: "As panteth the hart after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God," He ever responds: "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

To be like God! How glorious and entirely incomprehensible the very thought. Those attributes of power, with which we scarcely dare to think of associating ourselves, we will not consider in this connection. But the stupendous greatness of the moral and physical transformation is sufficient to overwhelm us. "He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." (Phil. 3:21.) "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. 15:49.) To have our *bodies* so transfigured as to resemble Christ's glorified one, is an anticipation that we cannot grasp. To partake of His nature in any degree, is almost beyond our conception; and yet how insatiably do we long for purity of heart, for perfection in *every* part, and these desires realized, we *would* be like Christ. This universal and intense desire alone is prophetic of its accomplishment.

But the renovation of our moral nature is a still greater conquest. It is sweet, indeed, to think that the redemption of the body involves cessation from all suffering, infirmity, deformity, or blight of any kind; that our sinless love for the beautiful in physical humanity shall then be gratified to the utmost; but that the moral part of humanity should correspond to the exterior, and he be "all glorious within," is what indeed we have ardently longed for, but scarcely dared to expect.

To be like Jesus is indeed sufficient to satisfy our most ardent aspirations. To be able to return good for evil under the most trying provocations; when "reviled" never to "revile again;" to have that "charity which thinketh no evil;" to do all to the glory of God in the most trivial transactions of daily life; to never "weary in well doing;" "to spend and be spent" in God's service; "instant in season and out of season;" and with such incomprehensible love for enemies as caused Him to lay down His holy, guileless life in their behalf, and in the expiring agonies of the mortal dissolution He was undergoing, so oblivious to self and suffering as to extenuate their crime to His Father and God. "This *was* compassion like a God." One would think the analogy could not be complete in all its parts; and yet John says: "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" if necessary, and no injunction is given without the adequate strength to perform it. Of course there could be no expiatory virtue in any blood that we could give, but it would show our assimilation to Him. And if such a degree of resemblance can be attained in this life, what will it be when He shall appear? If a mortal, like Stephen, could say: "Lord lay not this sin to their charge," in reference to his murderers, what may we not hope to attain in a state of perfection?

And then, too, we can only be satisfied in seeing this still beautiful creation, our world, restored to its pristine loveliness and glory. The contrast between its present state and former perfection, saddens and depresses us; and the gorgeous and magnificent delineations of its future grandeur, inspire us with intense longings for the accomplishment of the prediction, and dissatisfaction with its present imperfect state. We long to see Edenic bloom and beauty again; the wilderness and solitary places made glad, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. We long for verdure and bloom to be perpetual; for flowers to spring in perennial glory; for the bright sun's rays to be so modified as no longer to wither and burn,

Digitized by Google

but for his effulgent glory only to strengthen; to cause healthful growth and gladness of heart. We want the birds to sing forever,—the ice and snow, and chill and blasting winds of shivering Winter to vanish before the Sun of Righteousness, and *then* we shall be satisfied.

And then we long to see the curse, which *our* sin has entailed upon the innocent brute creation repealed. We feel ashamed and grieved when we see the suffering our fall has inflicted.

III. *When shall we be satisfied?*

David responds: "I shall be satisfied *when I awake with Thy likeness.*" John answers: "When *He shall appear, we shall be like Him*, for we shall see Him as He is." "And whosoever hath *this* hope in him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure;" thus recognizing the same desire for purification of heart, which can only insure satisfaction. To him who is sleeping in Christ, the consummation will be at the "resurrection of the just"—that first resurrection, which was the object of Paul's joyful hopes and intense desires—which precedes the general resurrection by a period of a thousand years. Instantaneous will be the transformation; "in a moment: in the twinkling of an eye;" "the corruptible will put on incorruption—the mortal immortality." This indeed will be a victory over death and the grave, that may well call forth joyful acclamations which shall ring through the whole universe. How little can human conception form any idea of the grandeur of miraculous power manifested in this instantaneous act. After the praying, the hoping, the toiling, the fearing, the doubting of a lifetime, to find the sum of all our hopes and expectations realized in the twinkling of an eye!

The satisfaction will be perfect and without the least alloy. They shall rise in His likeness. What more could they ask? And yet are they not promised a partnership with Him in the sovereignty over the world? "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." "Heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ." In view of our sinfulness and infirmities, it seems almost presumptuous to think such a thing possible. And yet it would be greater presumption to doubt His own words. The condescension of an Almighty Ruler towards the creatures of His own hand is indeed incomprehensible. O, that it would excite the most ardent devotion now, and that it would stimulate to the most thorough consecration of body, soul, and spirit to Him!

And another element in the satisfaction of these risen, glorified saints, will be their union in the clouds with their transformed brethren in the flesh. Both classes are represented in these texts,—those who *awake* in His likeness,—the resurrection saints, and the translated saints, whose assimilation to Him shall be accomplished by the sight of His glory and by personal contact with Him,—not, however, without miraculous interposition. This shall be exerted in both instances.

As it is evident this sweet hope of perfect satisfaction cannot be accomplished until the realization of "that blessed hope," which indeed comprehends the other, should we not earnestly pray for the speedy coming of that day for which all creation groans and sighs? Our selfish unwillingness to bear the burden and heat of the day, and to carry patiently the cross imposed by our Lord, may indeed dispose us to lay our burden down, ere our allotted portion of work, suffering, and waiting is accomplished. But if we are animated by no such selfish principle, but because we desire to see His glory exhibited in the earth and in humanity, and because we so yearn for our own moral and physical renovation, and because we so ardently wish for His sweet companionship that impatient love cannot brook the long delay,—then indeed should we hope, and pray, and watch, and earnestly look for that glorious day. We are commanded to "covet earnestly the best gifts;" and to all that the Holy Book asserts as our prerogative, we do ourselves an irreparable injury if we do not aspire with all our hearts. But let us so watch and pray that we may be accounted worthy to be in the first translation or resurrection. O, Lord, grant us soon that satisfaction! "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

M. E. S.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VIII. FEBRUARY, 1870. No. 2.

Special Contributions.

THE CREATION OF WOMAN.

This may be deemed a strange topic. It may, at first thought, be regarded by some as irrelevant, whilst others, who have given our system of truth more reflection, will be glad to find, perhaps, their own views confirmed, or at least strengthened, by being thus expressed. Indeed, many ideas derived from a careful comparison of Scripture remain unrevealed in the mind of some faithful student of the Word, because he either conceives that if put in print they will not be properly appreciated, or that others should first present them in order to avoid the appearance of producing novelties, or else, mistrustful of his own ability, he wishes others to precede, as a kind of confirmation of his own judgment.

The usual interpretations given to Gen. 2:21–23, containing the account of the creation of woman, are too constrained, and do not fully meet the requirements of its typical character. It is intended to shadow forth far more than a lively image of Christ's present love to believers, and his present union with them. That it is typical of something future, is evident from the language of Paul, Eph. 5:23–32, "The husband is the head of the wife, *even as Christ is the head of the Church;* and he is the Saviour of the body. . . . Husbands, love your wives, *even as Christ also loved the Church and gave himself for it.* . . . So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies; he that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it; *even as the Lord the Church, for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.* For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. *This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.*" Some, not being able to draw a complete parallel between the type and the antitype, or, finding a vagueness in those presented, tell us (*i. e* Barnes' Com. Eph. 5:32) that *the marriage relation* is no type of the union of Christ and the Church, and that we should be "saved from such insipid allegories as McKnight and others have derived from this passage." In reply to this allegation, allow me to say, that with the views they entertain respecting Christ and his Kingdom, the reign of the saints, &c., it is impossible for them to produce such a parallel. Besides, I do not say (for I speak for myself alone) that the marriage relation, *per se*, as it indiscriminately exists, is a type, but *that the creation of Eve and the relation she was made to sustain to Adam*, and to which the Apostle refers, *is a type* of the creation of an elect, chosen body of saints, and the relation they shall, in the future, sustain to the Second Adam. It is only the truth contained in the Millenarian system, as held by the Primitive Church and advocated by this periodical, that can properly adjust and show the peculiar significancy of that *marvellous* creation of woman.*

* It has frequently been attempted, from the earliest age, to understand in a scientific way (Neander Ch. His. vol. i, p. 386) the true signifi-

Digitized by Google

Let us then notice the type and its antitype; and may our faith, in the promised covenanted mercies, be greatly increased by the beautiful and forcible analogy derived therefrom.

1. The first Adam is, as admitted even by those who reject McKnight's and Bush's interpretations, a type of the Second Adam. In view of Rom. 5:14–21; 1 Cor. 15:45, &c., we need not spend time in proving that Adam "is the figure of him that was to come."

2. Before the creation of woman, "*the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept.*" Every reader of the Bible is familiar with the fact that "sleep" and "slept" are used to denote death. (John 11:11; 1 Cor. 11:30, 15:20, 51; 1 Thess. 4:14, &c.) By this sleep, then, is prefigured the death of Christ a deep sleep of over two days' duration. Perhaps this may give us some idea of the length of the first Adam's sleep.

3. *Whilst* Adam slept, God "*took one of his ribs*" out of his side, from which he made the woman. Notice, (*a*) the meaning of the word "rib." To avoid the charge of inventing a figurative or symbolic meaning to suit this case, let me quote the signification given to it by one who does not regard this passage typical. Thus Albert Barnes, Com., Dan. 7:5, when explaining the three ribs in the mouth of the bear, "others suppose that it (the ribs) denotes *the number of nations* or *kingdoms* which the people here represented by the bear had overcome. Perhaps this would be the more obvious idea as suggested by the symbol." He adds that it at least indicates those "already subdued," "former conquests;" that is, other nations, or a people. It is then employed to represent *a people* or *nation*. (I would not be surprised if the root of the Hebrew word denoted increase.) To carry out the parallel, a people or nation is taken out of the Second Adam. But how is this done? (*b*) The rib out of the side of the first Adam, is that *out of which* the woman is formed, so that, *out of which* the woman is builded for the Second Adam, is also taken from the side of the Second Adam. Let John, who witnessed it, testify as follows, the reader noticing that this was done *whilst Jesus slept*, or after his death: "But when they (the soldiers) came to Jesus and saw that he *was dead already*, they brake not his legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear *pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water*. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe." A people, a nation, therefore, is builded up out of that which was taken from his side, for without the shedding of that blood there could be no remission of sin, Heb. 9:22, and hence those whose sins are washed away in his blood, Rev. 1:5, and said to be *redeemed* by his blood, Rev. 5:9, *purchased* by his blood, Acts 22:28, *delivered* as prisoners (an allusion to the resurrection?) out of the pit by his blood, Zach. 9:11, *sanctified* by his blood, Heb. 13:12, &c. Thus, as the first Adam slept that woman might be formed, so the Second Adam slept (died) "that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people," Tit. 2:14, "that they which live, should live unto him who died for them," 2 Cor. 5:15, thus constituting, 1 Pet. 2:5. 9, "*a spiritual house*," "*a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people*," redeemed "*by the precious blood of Christ.*" For we must bear in mind that this blood is not merely efficacious in the bestowment of present blessings, but is far-reaching in its extent and results, embracing the deliverance of all saints from the power of the enemy death by the agency of a pre-eminent resurrection and their exaltation to that *manifested* oneness of relationship with Christ so gloriously promised. Through that blood, this people are continued to be gathered out, and it is through that blood

---

cance of marriage as originally instituted. All acknowledge from Paul's language that some mystery is connected with it. Now, every effort from the Valentinian Gnosis down to the present, if guided by science alone, has proven a failure. It is only by strictly following Revelation and the early Patristic Chiliasm that we obtain a clue to a typical representation that relates to the future relationship of Christ and the Church. What Platonism, what Ebionitism, what Gnosticism, &c., could not solve, divine truth, if received, places beyond controversy.

Digitized by Google

that the day is speedily coming when this people shall be manifested and publicly united to Christ, the last Adam. In other words, it is alone by this blood that the covenanted blessings can be verified, and perfected redemption can be experienced, and it is only those having faith in its efficacy who are singled out, separated, to obtain such redemption and its related blessings. And hence it is correct to say, that as the woman was taken from the side of the first Adam, so also another woman, "a chaste virgin," the bride, is taken from the side of the Second Adam. The "rib" is emblematic of both, whilst "the blood" is highly expressive of the manner in which the latter is affected, viz.: "He gave his life for the sheep."

4. Again, we are informed that after this rib was taken, God "*closed up the flesh instead thereof.*" Only one woman is thus to be created *for* Adam; and this is even more clearly intimated in verse 23, when Adam says, "*This is now bone,*" &c., which expression, according to the Hebrew, is: "*This is for this time, this once,* bone of my bones," &c. So Bush (Com., Gen. loci) renders it, and adds, "Implying that it was only on this occasion that woman was to come into being in this manner." More correctly, however, we would say, that it implies that only "*this once,*" or "*this time*" is one woman by this mode of formation derived from the side of the Second Adam, designed to bear *a special, most intimate and endearing relation* to Him. There was one Eve thus made for Adam, and according to the uniform testimony of the Scriptures there is one woman or one people peculiarly chosen, gradually formed and specially designed for the most intimate union with *the last Adam or Christ* in the age to come. Whilst in the age or dispensation to come, the blessings of Christ as Redeemer will be most liberally bestowed upon the restored Jewish Nation and the spared nations, yet it is also true, that *no other people* will be thus signally honored; for no others are thus taken and exalted with a kingship and priesthood, with a similitude and power like unto Christ's. Those familiar with Millenarian doctrine need not to be told how forcibly this "mystery," as Paul calls it, accords with our teaching, whilst to those to whom the subject of this special honoring of a certain elect body of saints may be new, we can only say, that to present this matter fully would require far more space than we can now give it. Let it suffice now, that at the beginning of the Millenial age this virgin thus specially formed for this Adam is represented as his "married wife," reigning jointly with him, &c., indicating that she occupies a relationship to Christ vastly different from all others.

5. "*Made He a woman,*" or, according to the Hebrew (so Bush and others), "*builded her to a woman.*" How this phrase "builded her" corresponds with the "building" of this woman or people for Christ may readily be seen by reference to Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Pet. 2:5, &c.

6. God "*brought* (or presented or led) *her unto the man.*" In like manner, we are informed that God, the Father, is the one through whom this woman or people for Christ is to be formed, and through whom she is to be presented to Christ. One reference alone will sufficiently illustrate this: — in the sublime prayer of Jesus, recorded by John 17, the Saviour acknowledges to the Father that these people are given to him by the Father: "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were and thou gavest them me," "that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee," and then proceeds to pray that the Father would "keep through his own name those whom thou hast given to me, that they may be one, as we are;" that not only the disciples then existing, but "all which shall believe on me" "may be one," and "that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me."

7. Then "Adam said, *This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh,*" or, "This is for this time, this once, bone of my bones," &c. The Apostle asserts the very same respecting the relation that the saints shall sustain to Christ in the passage already quoted from Ephesians: "For we are members of his body, of his flesh

Digitized by Google

and of his bones." The same is taught by the vine and the branches, that Christ is the head and the saints are the body or members. It would, however, by no means exhaust the deep meaning of such phraseology, if simply confined to a spiritual union existing between Christ and believers. This was said, mark it, after the woman was perfectly formed and presented to Adam a perfect woman.

Now in respect to this woman for Christ, the reader must notice, (1.) That she is not yet completed, and will not be, until the period of the Second Advent. (2.) Her members are held by the enemy death, and will not be released until that time has arrived. (3.) But she will be made complete, perfect, as such passages show:—Eph. 5 : 25–28; 1 Pet. 2; Jude 24, &c., being made "glorious," fully "adorned for her husband," freed from all defect, blemish, and imperfection. (4.) When thus made perfect, we are told (let not the reader charge me with extravagance;—we, indeed, deserve not such honor, but still it is part of that "*grace*" that shall be "brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ"), that the saints, represented by this woman, shall be made *like* unto Christ, not simply becoming partakers with him of similar offices and acts, but literally by having our souls filled with the miraculous power of the same Holy Ghost poured out without measure upon the head; and in the obtaining even of the same kind of a glorified body. Indeed, we may, when approaching so amazing and stupendous a subject, still modestly say, that it is impossible for us to keep in view the peculiar, distinctive significancy of the expression, unless we ponder over such promises: "*Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body*" ("*like the body of his glory*"), "*we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him,*" &c. Is it too much, if we adopt the phrase employed by Peter (2 Pet. 1 : 4), that they then are manifested as those who are, indeed and in truth, both in soul and body "*partakers of the divine nature?*" It is in virtue of this partaking of Christ that the type and antitype stand so closely related to each other.

8. "*She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.*" That is, being thus a partaker of man's nature, she shall be called after my name. Adam was called "*Ish*," and she was named "*Isha*" The parallel in this case has not been revealed, only the fact has been announced that this woman, when perfected, shall also have, Rev. 2 : 17, "a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." She is to have not only the name of the Father, showing her union with him through the Son, given to her, and the name of the New Jerusalem, so as to be recognized as belonging to that city, bestowed upon her, but, she is also to possess "*my (Christ's) new name.*" Rev. 3 : 12, and Rev. 14 : 1, comparing Prof. Stuart's translation of the latter passage, viz.: "having his (the Lamb's) name and the name of the Father written upon their forehead." Now, whilst it is impracticable to designate this name, yet in considering the type and the promises relating to the antitype, the *kind* of name will be suggested to a reflecting mind. It will be a formation derived from, related to, and expressing Christ's own royal name.

Having thus passed over the typical import of this creation, a few additional remarks may be properly presented for the reader's reflection.

1. This is, indeed, as Paul expresses it, "a great mystery." Concealed as it was for ages, but now revealed by the Spirit in the Word, it still (Barnes, Eph. 5 : 32) is "something into which one must be initiated or instructed before he can understand it." There are some things connected with it, which, owing to prevailing prejudices and views, are difficult to explain without resorting to great length;—whilst others will, probably, never be known until the full, complete realization of the antitype. We should therefore express ourselves with caution and confine ourselves to Scripture for explanations.

2. This view ennobles woman, or at least places her in a very honorable position. (In the coming kingdom, may not this typical nature of Eve's creation invest her with peculiar interest in the eyes of the rest of the saints?)

Digitized by Google

Whilst it insists on the headship of the husband, thus demolishing the claim of some ultra, strong-minded women, it equally insists upon the bestowment of love, honor, &c., such as the husband bestows upon himself.

3. The sneers and cavils of infidels will recoil upon themselves The creation of woman has been a standing jest with them. All the ridicule and sarcasm that the enemies of the truth could invent, has been poured out on it to weaken, if possible, the credibility of revelation, and thus impair our faith in the wisdom of God. From what has been stated, we see that they are blinded; for they appreciate not its force, its sublimity, its incomparable simplicity, its connection with the vast subjects it embraces. By their folly they show themselves utterly unworthy to experience the blessedness of the antitype. They make sport of that which adumbrates unspeakable happiness.

4. In Gen. 2 : 18, we read: "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." This gives the reason why Eve was created, viz.: the Creator saw that it was eminently proper that a help or companion meet or suitable (not "help mate," as some have it) for Adam should be provided for him in order to carry out the divine plans. This is equally true of Christ, according to the Scriptures;—for whilst he alone is the Redeemer, yet God has deemed it proper that a certain number of chosen saints should at the beginning of the millennial age be associated with Him in a strict union or companionship (not merely as servants, but brethren, yea more than brethren, partakers of his nature and glory), and who should enjoy the same offices, kingship, and priesthood, and perform the same acts, ruling, judging, &c. The original is more expressive than our rendering. In Bush's notes, Gen. loci, we find the following: "The exact rendering is '*an help as before him*,' *i. e.*, one corresponding to him, one adapted to him, a counterpart of himself, one like him in person," &c. Some one may be ready to exclaim, You give this woman, these saints, too exalted a position, and you make them too much like Christ, too godlike. We can only add, to such an indescribably great and glorious destination do the promises and love of God direct us, that, however unworthy of ourselves, we shall be like Christ, owing to the fact that God has, through grace, chosen us to form out of us a companion, in its aggregated capacity, suitable for the Son of Man, the Second Adam. Our exaltation, therefore, is dependent upon the pleasure of the Almighty manifested in providing *a proper companion* or *associate* for His own dear Son in his coming kingdom, and this exaltation is, of course, graduated by that which the Son, as the Second Adam, himself possesses. Herein lies the secret of this saintly glory, teaching us that these precious promises are not mere figures of speech highly indicative of a coming happiness, but that they contain a reality which will be realized both for the Father's and Son's sake.

5. Before the fall of the first pair, as a result of this creation of woman and her presentation to Adam, it is said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion," &c. Gen. 1 : 28. Dr. Kurtz, Sacred History, p. 41, on this promise to Adam, remarks: "This divine blessing conveyed to man authority to represent the divine omnipresence also, as far as his nature and great end, by which he was restricted to the earth, would admit, since this privilege was necessarily involved in the divine image in which he was made." We add, in the antitype it includes more: a recovered and extended dominion, a multiplication and replenishing the earth with sons and daughters of God. Let me be clearly understood;—whilst the saints neither marry nor are given in marriage, in view of their relationship to Christ, yet the predictions relating to the period of their manifestation as this perfected woman, do teach that in virtue of this very relationship existing between her and Christ (she aiding or participating in the work), the earth (in which "few men shall be left," owing to the judgments poured out), shall again be filled with multitudes, the spiritual offspring of this union. Many prophecies advert to this result.

6. This subject reveals to us the reason why Christ, Matt. 12 : 46–50, acknowledged his disciples in preference to his mother and kins-

Digitized by Google

folk. He did not intend to speak disparagingly of the latter, but already intimated, in the persons of the disciples as representatives or members of this perfected woman designed for Him, that all these earthly distinctions are to be absorbed in a higher, holier, dearer, more intimate union with those who are redeemed and chosen for his wife. With this woman the Second Adam purposes an indissoluble union (from which consideration the marriage contract, ordinarily, between man and woman is enforced) to meet the vast plan of Redemption, as it relates both to the race of man and the world; and when his mother and his kinsfolk approach, he simply, foreknowing the final result, draws a contrast between the present frail ties of blood and kindred, and those that shall exist in that more exalted relationship to be revealed. He meant no disrespect to Mary his mother, seeing also that she is a member of this body, but he *showed great respect* for his coming Bride.

7. Finally, we learn the inestimable privilege that we have to become identified with this woman. The work of completion is rapidly going on, and very soon will she stand forth completed, in perfected glory, the acknowledged, openly revealed Bride of the last Adam. Before this work is finished we are invited, urged, to become fully identified with her. *Only one such* is thus to be chosen, the rest who come after her are only virgins, not joint queens, with her. No one, coming after the period of the marriage, can be elevated to her rank or glory. It is impossible, seeing that the very nature of the union between her and Christ, sanctioned and brought by the Father, forbids it. The Bible gives us many plain intimations bearing on this point, and some try to ascribe this marked difference to the fact that the one class are redeemed from a state in which they endured trial, sorrow, tribulation, &c., whilst the others are redeemed in a state in which Satan is bound, and in which trial, sorrow, &c., shall not exist. If the reader has carefully followed us, he will find that the reason lies deeper than all this. Suffice it to say, let us all see to it that we have an abiding interest in the manifestation of this Bride, earnestly waiting and watching for the coming of the Bridegroom;—and may we all be so unspeakably happy as to participate in her happiness, honor and glory at that coming.

G. N. H. P.

THE RESTITUTION OF THE RATIONAL CREATION.

Acts 3 : 21 : "The times of the restitution of all things."

This is the age when men ascend the tribunal, and impiously sit in judgment upon the revelations and teachings of the Spirit of God. They declare with oracular authority what are essentials and what are not essentials in matters of religion and faith. And were all teachings and truths struck from the Scriptures which these self-made and capricious judges declare to be non-essentials, we would have a fearfully mutilated Bible. It would be like a canopy of heaven when the bright stars have been struck from their spheres. It would be the blood-stained Cross and the hardfought field without the starry crown, the kingdom of rest and eternal glory. For there are not a few who cry over the glorious and enrapturing doctrine of the *restitution of all things, non-essential! non-essential!* thereby ignoring the wisdom of God, and annihilating a fundamental doctrine; for of this He has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.

Since God has so spoken,—since it was for *this* glorious consummation, that His Son became incarnate, groaned and died on Calvary's quaking brow,—since it is for *this* that the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain together—the souls are crying under the altar, and the redeemed are singing in rapturous anticipation, "we shall reign on the earth," we contend, whatever others say to the contrary, that the *restitution* of all things is a doctrine of vast moment,—of essential importance everywhere set forth in Holy Writ. It is God's supreme argument to persuade to the performance of every duty, and His all-sufficient consolation under all the ills of life, and hence it is a duty and privilege of great magnitude to study and understand it.

Digitized by Google

Through the clear sight of prophecy we have glanced at the restitution of inanimate creation, the earth, and seen the parching ground gushing with fountains, abounding with streams of water, the desert rejoicing and blossoming as the rose, the fir-tree and the myrtle coming up instead of the thorn and the brier, and standing in their unfading green before the Lord, and the new creation as His everlasting sign or seal of the covenant, that earth shall never again be cursed for the sin of man.

In the same divine light we have seen the nature of the beasts of prey changed, and they, feeding on the herbage of the field, converted into one family of friendship and love; the wolf and the lamb dwelling together; the cow and the bear feeding; the lion eating straw like the ox; the sucking child playing on the hole of the asp; and the weaned child putting his hand on the cockatrice's den, and nothing hurting or destroying on the mountain of the Lord, in all the earth.

We propose now to glance at the *restitution of the rational* creation, the human race. And that we may have a somewhat full, clear, and extended view of this most glorious work, we propose to look at the following things, which will place before us the restitution of our race, and the condition in which they will be when restituted. We notice two particulars in this article:

I. The dead will be raised.

II. The living saints at the Lord's coming will be transfigured.

I. *The dead will be raised.*

This may be said to be the first act in the restitution of the intelligent creation at the time of the "restitution of all things."

Sin is the great destroyer of the human race. So Paul affirms when he says, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Here the doctrine is taught that sin is the cause of mortality to man; and awful has been the destruction with which it has visited our race. It has slain *all* the generations that have existed during the thousands of years since the creation of Adam, and all the families, and all the individuals that have composed these generations. It has dug all their graves, how vast their number!—and consigned all their bodies to the bosom of the earth and the mighty deep. There they are a mass of corruption. Many reduced to ashes thousands of years ago, and mingled with the dust; others in the last stages of decomposition, and others just beginning to yield to decay; and all the living under the same stern sentence, and moving on to the same dismal doom. What desolation broods over the many generations sleeping in the tomb! What a field of slain! What a vast graveyard!

But long as these dead may have slumbered there, and much as their ashes may have mingled with the dust of the earth, and together, and they apparently in utter ruin may have passed from life's scene, and yielded to the triumphs of death; yet, *their restitution is certain;* for when He comes who is the resurrection and the life, "all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." At the omnipotent call of that revivifying, restituting voice that human dust which has lain for thousands of years in the bosom of the earth, or been rocked in the billows of the mighty deep, shall hasten together, as by living instinct, and will be again fashioned into bone that will endure forever; and formed into indestructible ligatures and sinews to bind these bones eternally into unity; and shall be made flesh incorruptible to cover these bones; and skin that shall never wrinkle nor decay, but blush in immortal beauty to cover all. These forms now completely destroyed by the curse, reduced to ashes by corruption, shall be restored by omnipotent power, through the infinite merits of the Cross, to the image of God, more perfect and glorious than Adam when he was made by the creating skill of Trinity.

What a scene of life, and beauty, and glory this restitution of the dead in Christ presents to our view! Jesus the almighty restitutor comes; at His approach the graves of a *thousand* years, of *yesterday* and *to-day* are thrown open. The dust that has slumbered for ages under the curse, having nothing of human form, is instantly reorganized, and by a skill

Digitized by Google

divine *fashioned* into the perfect and glorious image of God. The breath of life, and the long or the lately separated spirit re-enters these resurrected bodies, and they are endowed with life, and have put on immortality. From the horrors of the grave, from the terrible, appalling desolations of the tomb, the destruction of the curse, the vast generations of mankind whom death has deposited there, come. *They come!* that which was sown in corruption, rising in incorruption; that which was sown in weakness, rising in power; that which was sown a natural body, rising a spiritual body; that which was sown in dishonor, rising in glory. They come! bearing no marks of the foul, damp graves in which they have slept, of the loathsome corruption by which they have been devoured, but perfect in purity, magnificent in beauty, and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. They come from the tomb under the restituting power of Jesus, clothed in garments clean and white; beautified and glorious as if they came from the resplendent palace of the Eternal, their faces shining as the sun, and their raiment white as the light. They come! the most glorious things that ever came from the bosom of the earth, more glorious than the brightest burnished gold, the most sparkling stones and shining sapphires, all polished by the skilful hand of the divine *Recreator*. They come! the *most beautiful and glorious creatures* in the universe of God, and to be the precious and sparkling jewels in the crown of the King of kings. They come, oh! they come, to "shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars forever and ever," "as the sun in the kingdom of the Father."

"See love, truth, and mercy, in triumph descending,
And nature all glowing in Eden's first bloom,
On the cold cheek of death smiles and roses are blending,
And beauty immortal awakes from the tomb."

Look at the graves everywhere opening, and pouring forth such glorious forms of beauty; the earth giving up these resplendent creatures, all fashioned into the glory of the Lord, and shining in their white raiment, the spotless righteousness of Christ. See them issuing from the abodes of death, the habitations of corruption, as the swarming bees from the hive, the very *perfection of life, and beauty, and glory*. See every lineament of the devil effaced, and all wrought into the perfect image of God, their once vile bodies fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body; every stain of sin washed out by the blood of the Lamb; every blight of the curse removed, and perfect holiness and unfading beauty restored; every tear of sorrow wiped away, and all the springs of grief turned into fountains of joy; the sighs of agonized hearts all hushed, and every sound songs of rejoicing; mortality swallowed up of life, so that the resurrected, restituted ones can die no more, and all fitted for the ages and enjoyments of eternity. See the glorious restituted multitude, moving in divine majesty into the eternal kingdom of the Father! See them forever eating of the fruit of the tree of life, and drinking of the water of the river of life, in the full enjoyment of endless blessedness. Look upon all this, meditate upon it, and say if the ravages of sin, if the desolation of the curse, if the destruction of death and the grave are not *restituted* and *more* than restituted! Say! oh, say! if human beings, thus redeemed from the curse of sin and the dominion of the grave, perfectly restored to the image of God, and made like unto the glorious Lord Christ, and attired in His radiant righteousness, are not restored to greater perfection, higher honor, richer glory and blessedness than they lost by Adam's fall. Yes! there is a new and dearer relationship formed between them and God by Christ's assumption of humanity and His redeeming them by His blood; and consequently when He comes to complete their redemption, they will not be merely restored to the same state of holiness, glory and blessedness, but to a state of far surpassing holiness, glory and blessedness; for then they shall be like God, *one* with Him, and forever with Him where He is. Then shall the restitution of the dead be complete, glorious, and eternal.

In this restituted state they will not be subject to the laws of gravitation, or the influences that control us now. Angel-like, in their advent to announce the birth of the Saviour;

Digitized by Google

Elijah-like, in his advent and departure from the mount of transfiguration; Christ-like, in His ascension from the mount of Olives; at *will* and by the power of *will*, they may soar aloft to the starry worlds that gem the crown of night; or shooting through the firmament of these, they may visit other orbs far beyond the milky way, the most remote that telescopic power has brought into view; and still on unwearied *will* they may pass through the far remote empyrean, to other orbs in other firmaments which form a part of the many mansions in our Father's immense house. But go where they may, visit what orb they may, should the question be asked by the principalities and powers in the heavenly places: Whence came you, and where is your home? they will reply, The earth is our home; thence we came; there we were born, there we died and were consigned to the grave under the curse; there the God-man died to redeem us; there we were regenerated, raised from the dead, restored to the image of God, and made like the Lord Jesus; and now are we the eternal citizens in our Father's house of many mansions, and with Him heirs of all things, and all things are ours.

"Star of the promised morning, rise!
Star of the throbbing wave,
Ascend! and o'er the sable brine,
With resurrection splendor shine,
Burst through the clouds with beams divine,
Mighty to shine and save.

"O, morning Star! O, risen Lord!
Destroyer of the tomb!
Star of the living and the dead,
Lift up at length Thy long-veiled head,
O'er land and sea Thy glories shed;
Light of the morning, come!

"Into each tomb Thy radiance pour;
Let life, not death prevail,
Make haste, great Conqueror, make haste!
Call up the dead of ages past,
Gather Thy precious gems at last
From ocean's deepest vail.

"Speak, Mighty Life, and wake the dead!
Like statue from the stone,
Like music from long broken strings,
Like gushings from deserted springs,
Like dew upon the dawn's soft wings;
Rouse each beloved one."

In these remarks nothing has been said of the resurrection of the wicked. They too are to be resurrected; for "as in Adam *all* die, so in Christ shall *all* be made alive." It is here declared that the wicked shall be restored to life, to life of which death deprived them. But not having accepted Christ for their Saviour, they will not be restored to that blessed and glorious state to which the righteous will be restored. But of them and their everlasting state we say nothing now.

II. *The living saints at the coming of Christ will be transfigured.*

When all the saints sleeping the sleep of death shall at the Lord's coming have been restored to life, immortality, holiness, blessedness, then the living saints, the saints in the body on the earth, ready for the change, who were not to go before the saints sleeping in the grave, into the glorious restituted creation, the wise virgins who go out to meet the coming bridegroom, shall be *changed* or transformed, and caught up to meet the Lord and the risen saints in the air.

The saints in the body ready for the Lord's coming, though mortal and under the sentence of death, shall *not die*. The sentence of death, through the blood of the Lamb, shall be repeated to them. They shall be *changed*, or, as the word signifies, transformed, that is, "the corruptible body shall put on incorruption, the mortal body shall put on immortality; then shall death be swallowed up in victory." The vile body in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, shall be purified from every stain of sin, from every seed of disease and corruption, and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, made *holy*, as He is holy; invested in robes washed and made white in His blood; glorious as the resurrection saints, radiant as the raiment of Jesus on the mount of transfiguration; they shall ascend, and meet the Lord, and all His resurrection saints in the air. This complete and divine change or transformation will make their restitution perfect and glorious, and then ever with the Lord in His image. Forever with the Lord in His glory! Forever with the Lord in His kingdom. Forever with the Lord in the eternity of His being and blessedness.

Digitized by Google

When thus changed and transformed, they will be restituted, and more than *restituted;* for they will be more glorious, being enrobed in the righteousness of Christ, which they would not have been, had they not sinned, and He had not become their Saviour; more nearly related to God, being made one with Him through unity with His Son, which they would not have been, had He not taken upon Him their nature. For this restitution the whole creation is groaning and travailing together, and waiting for the time when the heavens shall reveal the Lord Jesus Christ for the accomplishment of the great and glorious work.

J. H.

MORE ABOUT OUR TIMES.

We feel constrained to touch again upon the characteristics of these latter times, from the more immediate standpoint of our own experience, because some of them seem to be so strikingly exemplified in our circle of observation, and because the Holy Spirit seems to impress upon our minds the great importance of taking heed to these things,—infinitesimal almost, as they seem in comparison with the bold and wondrous in the physical and political world, but no less sure and unmistakable harbingers of the greater night of darkness that precedes the glorious, long-expected day.

Paul, in his summary, 2 Tim. 3:3, mentions a disposition to "despise the good," and a "want of natural affection," as among the indications of approaching doom. Less conspicuous, as we have observed, than those that commend themselves more readily to the senses, they yet loudly prophesy to the humble and attentive watcher of those "things which must shortly come to pass;" embracing also the solemn admonition to "take heed lest he also fall."

With our old-fashioned, and, as we suppose, scriptural ideas, we have long regarded religion as a positive thing;—positive not only in doctrine, but also in practice. It is considered a mark of superior piety in these days to attach no importance to specific doctrines,—for each one to accept the Bible according to his individual interpretation or fancy,—and it is not strange, as doctrines are thus explained away entirely, or diluted into non-efficient things, that the practical inculcations should also be mystified and spiritualized; and the Antinomian error widely prevail, that we are not expected to keep these commands in their literal significance. It is more than we can do, they say, even aided by Omnipotence; and if we only *desire* to perform these things, it is all that God expects of our weakness. They explain away or spiritualize the doctrines, and then the sequence,—a spiritual assent to the precepts is all that is required,—seems to be inevitable. The true doctrine we have seen thus expressed: "A faith too inoperative to move us in life's duties is certainly too feeble to affect our estate amid the awards of eternity."—*Lectures on the Gospels.* By Dr. Seiss.

In a book that contains much that is excellent, and from an unexceptionable source, it is taught that entire consecration to God demands a surrender of all that pertains to us, internal and external, and especially our worldly possessions. At the same time, it is perfectly legitimate for a Christian to live with all Solomon's regal magnificence, if his means will justify it. He thus encourages trade, art, &c. He offers his wealth to God, and if He does not see fit to deprive him of it by some providential stroke, he is justifiable in expending it upon the gratification of his tastes and appetites, which we are expressly commanded to crucify. We do not mean that giving our all to God implies an asceticism that demands the abrogation of the necessaries or comforts of life; or that self-denial and crucifixion are at all meritorious in His sight; but simply that, when He commands us to crucify our flesh, with its affections and lusts, He does *not* mean that we shall revel in extravagance and self-indulgence; nor expend our means entirely upon the beautiful creations of art; nor enjoy to an *inordinate* degree even the glorious works and gifts of His own hand, however pleasing these things may be to our æsthetical tastes, when they interfere with His claims upon our possessions; or when our wretched brethren around us are destitute of the necessaries of life. When these accounts

Digitized by Google

are fully settled, then we have a right to indulge æsthetic tastes.

And those of us who feel that we are in duty bound to carry out the commands of our blessed Lord literally, are regarded as fanatics even by our brethren. We have known some derided and laughed at frequently, and very recently they were stigmatized as fools, because they were unwilling to participate in questionable amusements, and to conform to the extreme of fashion in dress. The involuntary respect that was formerly paid to genuine piety has been replaced by absolute contempt and dislike. A feeling of malignity is felt and displayed by the wicked towards the righteous, and solely on account of the piety of the latter, that we would be at a loss to understand, did we not feel that the Antichristian spirit is developing itself in every direction. They cannot endure the silent rebuke of a consistently Christian deportment, and their malice is exhibited in many forms of petty persecution, which will increase in intensity and extent as the power is acquired. They are on good terms with many professors of religion; for they find these their willing coadjutors in their attacks upon true Christians, and these professors are also ready to follow them to any extreme of worldliness. *They* excite no fears in the consciences of worldlings, nor recall a thought of the awful accountability to be rendered up for misused time and privileges. The truth of the declaration, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," is illustrated in the career of every Christian to a greater or less extent; but never since the days of an arbitrary physical persecution, has the humble follower of Jesus found it so difficult to adhere strenuously to his principles of right, in consequence of the obstacles imposed by worldly malignity, and the many "perils" to which he is subjected from the scorn, ridicule, persuasions and example of "false brethren."

We "watch and pray," and observe the "signs of the times," and are denounced as fanatics, weak-minded, half crazed. We warn them against the spirit of worldliness so prevalent, and which has insensibly infected us all, and insulting epithets are our answers. We are "righteous overmuch;" or hypocritical or enthusiastic pretenders to an amount of piety not required by God, incompatible with the practical performance of our secular obligations,—and simply monasticism in the world instead of in the cloister.

We tell them of the awful tribulation and fearful persecution, whose dire "events," even now, "cast their shadows before," and "we seem to them as those who mock." They pity our imbecility, but, at the same time, feel it their duty to remind us of the danger of wresting Scripture to our own destruction. Nothing but the most infatuated folly and the most superstitious ignorance, could anticipate such improbabilities in this enlightened age. We caution them against the Antichristian spirit that is so palpably manifesting itself to those who watch; we speak of the progress of Popery, and they say: "We will assist in building churches for the Romanists, for we *must* have their labor." The increase of Popery is a secondary matter compared with their interests.

But time would fail to tell of the many ways in which this spirit manifests itself.

We pass on to another characteristic,—want of natural affection.

We have been particularly impressed with the prevalence of this sign. Before it occurred to us as one of the characteristics of the last days, we were exceedingly perplexed at this unaccountabe state of things. Previous to the war, even, which was most truly supposed to have an indurating effect upon all exposed to its influence, we have wondered if the change was entirely in ourselves, or if people had grown callous.

We feared we were becoming very exacting, and expected a great deal from poor, frail humanity; and yet we looked back upon the time when love, patience, and forbearance seemed to rule in many households; when we saw large families of brothers and sisters, parents and children, seemingly devoted to each other by the tenderest ties of affection, and when we felt it a privilege to be in the midst of such soothing and harmonious influences. We remember when many seemed almost selfishly indifferent to the society of

Digitized by Google

the outside world, so attractive was the home circle, and so happy were they in that sacred place. When mothers regarded it not as an irksome task to instruct their little children about the God who made them, and the Saviour who died for them, but esteemed it a blessed privilege; and it was no uncommon thing to hear little ones talk sweetly on such subjects. It was no self-denial to absent themselves from places of amusement, for it was an exceeding joy to watch the unfolding beauty, and train the expanding intellect of the precious ones whom God had given. And parents then had an influence over their children, for they exercised a judicious restraint, and thus commanded a respect and deference that is not possible under the present lax system of domestic government.

It seemed to be considered not only a duty, but a pleasure, to assist and relieve each other in every possible way, not for public opinion's sake, not for self-interest's sake, but in quiet, unobtrusive little things, of which the world cannot take cognizance, and which expected no return. True affection was exhibited, as well as in that more ostentatious aid which dares not be withheld for fear of public opprobrium. We assert not that such sentiments and demonstrations were universal, but that they prevailed to a much greater extent than at this time, even among the irreligious; and that they were the rule, not the exceptions, in Christian families, no close and candid observer will deny.

And did affliction and suffering overtake a member of a small community, well acquainted and closely sympathizing with each other, *all* seemed to feel an interest, accompanied by substantial demonstrations of sympathy, that plainly said: "We feel ourselves appointed by Providence the especial custodians of the poor and afflicted." The worldly, even from natural feeling, seemed pleased to bestow the evidences of pity.

Do we *generally* find matters thus now? or even to a large extent? Such is not our experience. Our hearts, at times, are saddened and depressed, almost beyond hope, because in no earthly relation can we see pure, disinterested affection. Our hands hang down, and our hearts are faint, because darkness is all around. True, the blessed Sun of Righteousness shines brightly above all, and these are only certain premonitions of a still more glorious effulgence, but the clouds are so dark and heavy as to almost obscure the Sun; and weak human vision cannot always see the "silver lining."

Parents having become "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," have consequently become "lovers of their own selves" (another sign), and it is no longer the absorbing object with them to make home the brightest, sweetest spot in the world to their families; and their children certainly seem to occupy but a subordinate place in their affections. Look at the unruly, ungovernable children that have been neglected for all kinds of frivolous amusements, or self-indulgence; the inebriates, gamblers, forgers, murderers, and riotous young men that have emerged from these homes to occupy felons' cells, expiate their crimes on the scaffold, or rid themselves of their own wretched existence by suicide.

And the daughters! Reckless devotees of fashion, trained for nothing good or useful in life, and frittering out an idle, aimless existence in novel-reading, fancy work, entertaining company, and visiting. Such are, principally, their pursuits, varied by others far less innocent. And, as a result of parental unfaithfulness and selfishness, look at the wretched marriages contracted by these unfortunate victims of the non-performance of duty. Are you not familiar with many such cases? Anxious only to get their daughters married, they have scarcely even given themselves the trouble to ascertain whether the applicant is not already married; and numbers can be found in every community who have been deceived by wicked men, returned to their parents, and their condition far more pitiable than that of the desolate widow. This is no exaggerated picture, and every one must feel it to be so. Is this not want of natural affection? We have often been amazed when we noticed the extreme indifference of fathers and mothers about these things.

Digitized by Google

And how many others of these poor, misguided victims are leading lives of sin and wretchedness to an extent unparalleled in this country hitherto. This part of the subject is too painful to be pursued; but surely, in most instances, the sin lieth at the parents' doors. And whence come the numberless divorces that are an infamy to our land? Is not the primary cause want of natural affection? Were the parties trained, as they should have been, to assume the solemn responsibilities of their new position? or did they have that love that would have enabled them to bear with each other's infirmities? Were they not selfishly absorbed in their own pleasures and pursuits, and utterly indifferent to the fact that incompatibility of temperaments, if these cannot be made to harmonize, can at least learn to bear and forbear? Of course this forbearance in perfection can only be attained by divine grace; but even *love* for an object will very naturally impel us to overlook much that is otherwise disagreeable.

And the same indifference and selfishness prevail in every relation in life. Those families in which love once shone so brightly, and in which so much that is beautiful flourished, seem now to be influenced by the same spirit of worldliness and selfishness that reigns almost universally. The change is marked and unmistakable. Self-interest seems to have superseded purer, holier feelings, and in many instances we hear these last made the subject of ridicule. The poor and unfortunate, too, are characterized as the idle and improvident, want of success is denominated lack of energy, and very little patience is exhibited towards the afflicted and sorrowing. In numberless ways might we show manifestations of this spirit, but this is sufficient.

Are we not conscious of some of these things in ourselves? Or is there not danger of becoming infected by them? Should we not "watch and pray" with all our hearts that the "great day" come not upon us unawares, and that we may be "accounted worthy to escape" the great tribulation, and to stand before the Son of Man? We know not how it is with others, but for ourselves we feel there is great danger, and constantly feel the need of "looking unto Jesus!" May He strengthen for every emergency! M. E S.

Editorial.

THE ORDER AND TIME.

"Dear Sir: If you can spare a few moments from the pressing engagements with which I know you are overwhelmed, and will relieve my perplexity by simply indicating very briefly *the order of events* connected with or constituting the Second Coming of Christ, locating the confederation of the last kings, the smiting by the 'stone' and the Jewish (partial) restoration, I will be greatly obliged.

"I understand you to say that the first in the series of events which mark and accompany the Coming of the Lord will be His *invisible* Coming to the neighborhood of our globe, which will be immediately followed by the eagle translation; and that then will succeed the Seals, Trumpets and Vials, covering a period of seven years, and closing with Christ's *visible* manifestation and the destruction of Antichrist.

"Now, we are told that in the days of these (10) kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom. Are the invisible Coming of Christ, and the translation of the eagles, the first events in this setting up?

"So we are told that a partial restoration of the Jews will take place under a seven years' league with Antichrist. Then, if the last three and one-half years of his career terminate at Christ's visible Coming, the seven years' league must begin with the rapture of the eagle saints.

"You see, I presume, my difficulty, viz., what is the probable *order of events?* Are the confederation, and the return of the Jews, *in the series* which *constitute* the Coming of Christ, or are they *antecedent?* Or, is it that, although the confederation is formed before the rapture, it is not until three and one-half years after the latter event that Antichrist enters upon his career of blasphemy and persecution? And, if this be so, then, is the league made with the Jews, and their restoration, accomplished *before* the translation of the eagle saints, or be-

Digitized by Google

tween that event and the development of Antichrist under the sixth seal?"

Remarks.—It would perhaps require more time and space than we can now bestow, to disentangle, to the full satisfaction of our correspondent, the various inquiries which overlie each other in the above presentations.

1. We would say, that the various acts and manifestations which make up what the Scriptures call the *coming*, *presence* or *apocalypse* of our blessed Lord, yet to come, are *one* series of things; and the antecedents, concomitants and results of the same, among the various classes of mankind and the course of nature and the world, are *another* series; though the two are largely contemporaneous and closely related to each other.

2. All God's doings in these great matters are processes. Gradation and progress are involved in every final result, though the finished product only is sometimes spoken of, and at others some special step in the process. A dispensation is a *result*, though itself contemplating still further results; yet no one can point out just precisely where a dispensation begun or ended. The germ of one is within its predecessor, and they all overlap. The change from the one to the other is an historic process; and whether more summary or more protracted, it is never confined to a single moment of time, or to a few isolated facts or administrations. There is first a beginning, and then the work goes gradually on, through a course of years, until the fulness of the new order is realized.

Even so plain and individual a thing as Christ's first coming, was distributed over a series of not less than *thirty*-three years. Very many particular events and manifestations were included in that coming, and each several one is spoken of, in the old prophecies and in the New Testament history, as his Coming. If we take the preceding predictions, and attempt to confine them to any one year of Christ's earthly life, it is simply impossible to find the fulfilment of all of them. He came, when he was born at Bethlehem, but not "riding upon an ass," nor "out of Egypt," nor "to his temple." He came when He appeared before John for Baptism, and successively here and there in the villages and cities of the Holy Land, where He preached and wrought miracles. He came when He rode into Jerusalem, and scourged the profane out of the temple; and when He reappeared after His crucifixion. These were all distinct comings, each separately prophesied of as His comings, and yet all only parts, incidents, or sections of the one complex thing called His *first coming*. And it is in like manner that we must distribute the different predicted incidents and administrations of His second coming. It is simply out of the question to harmonize half the prophecies of his impending advent, or to understand them with any degree of clearness, by undertaking to connect them all with one scene, or one day's operations. Some of them are wholly different from others, concern different parties, and relate to quite different administrations. We must therefore distribute them through a series of years, and look at each as distinct in itself; and then only will the pictures harmonize, and every circumstance be fulfilled. The coming of Christ "as a thief in the night" is certainly not the same scene with that in which "every eye shall see Him." We read of a *presence* in which nothing is visible to the world but "the sign of the Son of Man in heaven," and of another stage of his marvellous doings when the tribes of the earth behold Him in the clouds coming "with power and great glory;" Matt. 24:30. There is a coming when all the world is in quiet, and from the same bed, field, or scene of ordinary occupation, "one shall be taken and another left;" and another coming when "before Him shall be gathered all *nations*." There is a coming *for* his saints (1 Thess. 4:16, 17), and another coming *with* His saints (Jude 14:15; Rev. 19:13, 14). There is a coming to adjudge the apostate and unwatchful Church to the sorrows of the great tribulation, out of which multitudes are yet saved, and a coming to end that tribulation which sends the beast, the false prophet and their adherents to irremediable perdition. It is the height of absurdity to undertake to combine all these diverse things in one scene, or to locate them in one and the same point of time. We *must* distribute them, as the

Digitized by Google

various scenes and manifestations of the first coming. And yet, they all belong to one process—one series of judicial wonders—which, in each of the several stages of accomplishment, as in the sum and completion of the whole, is called Christ's coming, presence, or apocalypse.

3. We do not presume to confine these grand and diverse administrations of the returning or returned Saviour within *seven years*. It may even be *forty* years, as some consider. All that we insist on is, that it will embrace, at the very shortest, *not less than* seven years. We know the difficulty of locating all the events predicted in so short a space of time, and hence are quite persuaded that there will be a longer time for these wonders; but we have mentioned seven years as the shortest possible space, in view of the statements of time found in the prophecies themselves.

4. The very first thing in the wonderful process will be, the resurrection of the dead in Christ; for this is to precede even the translation of the living saints. (1 Thess. 4 : 16.) It is not probable that this will be a thing visible or manifest to the common world. No mortal eye saw the resurrection of Christ. How long it will be between the resurrection of the saints and their ascension "together with" the translated ones, we cannot tell. It was "forty days" from Christ's resurrection to his ascension. Nor have we any evidence of any league with the Jews, or return of the Jews, or development of the blasphemous and persecuting Antichrist in his final and personal manifestation, before this rapture of the saints, who "mount up with wings as eagles." "When He who now letteth"—the Holy Ghost as manifested in Christ's faithful people—is "taken out of the way" by the removal of these faithful ones from the world, "*then* shall that wicked be revealed." (2 Thess. 2 : 7–12.) It may be very soon after, and it may be a considerable time after, but certainly *after* the rapture, that the great Antichrist is to be revealed; and it is only under him that any considerable regathering of the Jews to Palestine is to occur; as the Saviour said to them: "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, *him ye will receive*." (John 5 : 43.)

5. The development of the Antichrist being subsequent to the rapture, and hence also the preliminary restoration of the Jews, so also is the confederation with him of the ten kings. And the final blow which the "stone" of Daniel strikes upon these ten kings, dashing them and all their power to atoms, and overthrowing the beast and the false prophet, is described in the nineteenth of Revelation.

6. The setting up of the God-kingdom is not one event, but a process. That process began with the first Advent. It is going on now, in the calling of men to be the co-regents of Jesus in that kingdom. The resurrection, glorification, and crowning of these saints, and the apportionment of reward to each, is a still further part of the process. The decisive act which introduces this God-kingdom as the ruling power of the earth, is the judgment and overthrow of Antichrist and his confederated hosts by the personal and fiery revelation of the Son of God on the Mount of Olives at Jerusalem, as described in Zech. 14 and Rev. 19.

7. The seals, trumpets, and vials of the Apocalypse describe the consecutive order of judicial events between the rapture of the saints and the destruction of Antichrist and his hosts. They give the scenes of the Judgment period, intermingled, however, with administrations of mercy also, to those who are made wise by what they see and hear, and learn righteousness, and betake themselves to the blood of the Lamb, as foretold in Daniel 12 : 10, and Joel 2 : 32. The space of time these seals, trumpets, and vials will occupy cannot be less than seven years, though it may be forty, or even more; we cannot tell. From the long waiting of the ten virgins, which represent the professed followers of Christ after the Saviour has taken his Bride—that is, after the translation,—would seem to intimate that the time will be much longer than will be generally supposed.

8. "The first Resurrection" is, again, not one single resurrection, accomplished at one instant of time. It began when Christ arose. (Matt. 26 : 52, 53.) Some suppose that it has

Digitized by Google

been going on, at certain intervals, ever since. Selnecker, one of Germany's greatest divines, of the age next succeeding the Reformation, quotes Ambrose as teaching, that *every year some saints are raised from their graves*, and ascribes the same opinion to Luther, as well as accepts it as his own. Whether we agree to this or not, it remains true, on Scripture testimony, that the first resurrection did begin eighteen hundred years ago. It will have a grand accession when Christ comes for his saints. (1 Thess. 4 : 16, 17.) It will receive another grand accession under the sixth seal. (Rev. 7 : 9–17.) It will receive other accessions under the seventh trumpet. (Rev. 12 and 14.) Until it receives the final accession in the persons of those who were beheaded under the last three and one half years of the Antichrist; and only then, the whole body of the first resurrection appears in its completeness. (Rev. 20 : 4–6) For, as observed by Selnecker, "To this resurrection belongs everything that is raised to immortality before the last day." Then comes "the thousand years" of the glorious dominion of Christ and his enthroned ones. As that period reaches its fulfilment, a rebellion is fomented in the outskirts of the world, which is overthrown by fire from heaven, the final judgment is enacted, and the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, are perfected, and the work of Redemption is finished.

We do not know whether the inquirer who has written us on this subject will find his perplexities in any way relieved by these statements or not. They will, at any rate, serve to indicate how these momentous matters impress us, and show how the varied events connected with the ending of this age distribute themselves, in our view, upon the prophetic pages.

Another inquirer is troubled to know whether the new earth of Isaiah and Peter are the same as that described in Revelation 21; and whether we are to find it before, or only after the end of the thousand years; and how it is that Isaiah's new earth seems to embrace people in the flesh, whereas the day of judgment would seem to leave no one living in the flesh. The above remarks will also throw some light upon these inquiries. We may add, that the Scriptures say nothing about the cessation of the human race, as such, but speak of "perpetual generations." If the race is to stop, what stops it? Judgment upon sin? Then the devil's work of destruction is more effective and complete than the redemptive work of the almighty Jesus. Can this be? The command to increase and multiply was before the fall, and why can it not proceed after the effects of the fall have been exscinded as well as under them? If redemption does not preserve the ongoing race of man, then is it not a successful redemption, seeing that the jewel perishes, and only a few individual splinters are saved from the general wreck! No; the new earth is to be populated with "people who build houses, plant vines, eat grapes, pray, and bring up children" unto the Lord. But they must not be confounded with the glorified Church,—the saints who are resurrected and translated. These live a heavenly life, and "neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are *as the angels of God*," and will have to do with the generations in the flesh only as angels in preceding ages have had to do with the heirs of salvation. The one class will be heavenly, immortal, and eternal kings; the other class will be earthly subjects, with an earthly though holy and happy career to run, the same as Adam and his descendants, if they had never sinned.

Nor is the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness a sudden creation. It is the result of a gradual and varied process. The administrations, appointments, and results of Christ's first coming belong to that process. The wonders and concomitants of his coming again will mark a much greater advance in the mysterious *Palingenesia*. It will already be in good part the new heavens and the new earth during the thousand years. But it will not be that new order *in its glorious completeness* until the final rebellion at the close of the thousand years is crushed out, and the final judgment sits, and the tabernacle of God is settled among men, and the great voice from heaven pronounces that "*the former things are passed away*." (Rev. 21.)

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VIII. MARCH, 1870. No. 3.

Special Contributions.

LITTLE CHILDREN AND CHRIST'S COMING.

No. 1.—BY JEDA.

I AM anxious to have an answer on the following important question: Will little children who are brought up in the faith of Christ's coming have a part in the first resurrection, or eagle-rapture? Undoubtedly the greater portion of the righteous dead consists of those lambs of the flock who only inherited the wages of sin through their parents. Having been washed in Christ's blood, sanctified, justified, and sleeping in Him, will He bring them with Him? If they are not made priests and kings, will they not be reckoned in with the same glorified company, and so in some sense and degree be *of* them, and form a part of the great whole? The promise is to us and our children. Does not that promise include this also? He who said, "Suffer the little ones to come unto me, and forbid them not;" who took them in His arms and blessed them, will He not gather them again to the living pastures of His love until the indignation be overpast? He who, on sending His disciples forth, gave this command, "And when ye preach, say the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" whose last injunction to the much-forgiven Peter was, "Feed my lambs," surely meant that those little ones were to be fed in the precious belief of His coming again.

It is written, "Whom having not seen ye love, in whom though now ye see Him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." (1 Pet. 1:8) Is not the faith of a child perfection itself? "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 18:10.) Does not the following allude to the gathering in of the first fruits? "He shall gather the lambs in His arms, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." (Isa. 40:11.)

Can little children not have faith? One morning I said to my little girl, not yet four years, "Did you pray for mother, darling?" "No, mamma," was the satisfied answer. "Why not?" "Cause, mamma, God will take care of you." "How do you know, pet?" "Cause, mamma," and the blue eyes sparkled triumphantly, "God is love." Do not these dear little ones put to shame our weak faith? "For when for the time we ought to be teachers, we have need that one teach us again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." (Heb. 5:12.) I am bringing up this little soul in the faith of Christ's coming, and her prayer is: "Behold, I *tum*. Even so, Lord Jesus, *tum*," spoken in her own way. She says: "Mamma, won't my Jesus come some day with little sister, and my uncles and aunts, and take you and papa, and your baby home?" How my heart echoes the wish, *Amen!*

We have a custom here among the children (and one often sought to be made availing by some of larger growth), that when anything is purchased, a *Lagnappe* (something thrown in),

Digitized by Google

is expected, and demanded as a right. And since

"Jesus died and paid it all,
All the debt we owe."

may He not—*He*, the blessed One who bought with His blood these little ones, and whose will it is that none of them should perish—*He* whom His Father delighteth to honor—may not He claim for *His Lagnappe*, on the resurrection morn, these living gems, who wait "to be clothed upon with their house which is from Heaven?" "Of such is the kingdom." I know that Christ is able to save to the uttermost all those who come to God by Him, and that not one of His can be lost; and a comfort it would be to have our little ones with us, safe from the waves of "the great tribulation" in His arms.

He bringeth His jewels one by one,
To the least of all His love is given;
He counteth *them* gold,
Whose angels behold
His Father's face which is in heaven.
MATT. 18 : 10.

How true it is that without faith it is impossible to please God. "Without are doubtings, and within are fears." But the faith of a little child would be a faith to guide us safely, to enable us to stem the trouble agitating so many believing hearts. Will not that faith, then, serve for little children themselves? The Saviour cometh. "Surely, I come quickly," is His word. "Let us rend our hearts, and awake to righteousness, lest we be found sleeping, and the Bride be gone before we are aware of it. Yea, she followeth the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." (Rev. 14 : 4.) Let us ever remember that we are to have the "Father's name written in our foreheads" with the precious blood of Jesus, and on our hearts to bear the sweet burden of the cross. My little girl asks: "Mamma, will the Lord Jesus come to day?" Even so; come, dear Lord, and help us to purify ourselves with this hope as Thou art pure. Hear our prayers for our little ones, that they may be among the blessed that have part in the first resurrection. Amen.

No. 2.—BY J. E. C.

I am desirous to know what is the Bible teaching relative to the fate of young children and infants at the time of the second Advent of the Saviour. Are they supposed to be left upon the earth during the season of sore distress which is to come upon it? Being a parent, and in some degree awakened to the momentous truths your serial promulgates, this subject gives me inexpressible anxiety. Will you have the goodness to give my query some notice in your next issue?

No. 3.—BY THE EDITOR.

It is a legitimate inquiry, and one of deep interest, which has been started by our correspondents. We can only say, that the blessed Lord has sufficiently taught us respecting the excellence of His administrations in general, and of the spiritual relations of the lambs of the flock in particular, to leave no room for distressing anxiety with reference to it.

As a general rule, children yet in immaturity, follow the estate of their parents, or those who fill the places of parents to them.

At the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, the children of Christians were delivered with Christians, and the children of the unbelieving Jews suffered with their unbelieving parents. And as that was the earnest of the future scenes of judgment upon the nations, so it will be again. The children of the enemies of Christ will share in everything visited upon their parents in their earthly estate, and will go into the tribulation along with the wicked families to which they belong. And the infants of those who are privileged to escape what is thus coming upon the earth, will also escape with the believing and watching parents with whom they are connected.

We do hold, however, that it is very important for parents who are expecting and waiting for the coming of Christ, to instruct their children, from early infancy, in the same blessed hope. It is wonderful, also, with what readiness, comprehension, hopeful joy, and zeal, even young children take in a subject which so many of our professed theologians consider dark and

Digitized by Google

difficult. We have known of little children talking like apostles on this blessed hope, to the astonishment of their learned parents. It is impossible to suppose that the loving Jesus would leave such to suffer the judgments of the great tribulation.

THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL.

DIFFERENT theories are advanced in our days concerning the object of the preaching of the Gospel. Some of these theories have little or no Scriptural basis. Some say that the preaching of the Gospel will eventually bring all men to Christ; others, that this our land will become Immanuel's land, and that American laws and institutions will bring about the Millennium; still others hold that woman's right to vote and to be voted for must be acknowledged before Christ's kingdom can be established in its full extent. We shall pay but little attention to these views. Our object is to inquire, What does Scripture teach concerning this point?

1. Is it contemplated in the word of God, that the present preaching of the Gospel is to result in the salvation of all men? We answer most emphatically, *No.*

The Scriptures nowhere teach that all men shall be saved. Paul, in the last chapter of Acts, stating the results of his preaching to the Jews at Rome, says: "And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not." And this has been the result from the very first sermon ever preached until today. *Some believed, and some believed not.* "Many are called, but few are chosen." "The wheat and the tares will grow together until the great harvest."

But may not the preaching of the Gospel ultimately convert the world? Seeing what it has done in the past, may we not confidently expect that it will do much more in the future? Although we believe that the Gospel will accomplish great results, more even than we possibly can conceive, yet have we no assurance in God's word that all will be brought to Christ. On the contrary, we have many Scripture warrants to believe that until the second coming of Christ wickedness will increase, for Christ asked: "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" "As the days of Noe were, so shall the coming of the Son of man be." He shall come as a thief in the night, finding most of the people unprepared, in the midst of pleasure and worldly lusts, and "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Furthermore, we find a most positive prophecy in the 3d chapter of 2d Timothy, that in the "last days perilous times shall come." For men shall be lovers of their own selves, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy; that is to say, wickedness will abound, and righteousness be greatly wanting.

2. If, then, the preaching of the Gospel is not to bring all men to salvation, and not to bring about the conversion of the whole world, what is its object? We answer, it is threefold: (1.) To make known God's plan of salvation. (2.) To bring God's elect unto Christ. (3.) To be a witness at the day of judgment against those not believing.

In the Gospel is made known that which by no other agency could be known, that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;" that *pardon is provided;* and that God is willing to impart that pardon to every penitent and believing soul. These precious truths the wisdom of man could not find out; great philosophers could not discover them. For though natural religion undoubtedly reveals much, yet its revelations cannot save man, nor lift him out of his darkness and sins. By this preaching and making known God's plan of salvation, God's own elect are to be brought to Christ and life everlasting; even those who believe, both from among the Gentiles, and the remnant according to the election of grace from among the Jews. To these preaching is "the savor of life unto life." "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved;" but, "How shall they hear without a preacher?"

Digitized by Google

But the Gospel is preached also as a witness against those who believe not. Christ said: "This Gospel shall be preached as a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." And Paul understood that he was not only serving God by successfully proclaiming the truth as it is in Jesus in the case of those who received his word and came to Christ with repentant hearts, seeking that Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, but also in the case of unbelievers. He says: "We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ; in them that are saved, and *in them that perish:* to the one we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life." Those who reject the Gospel salvation, at the day of judgment shall be condemned by this very Gospel which, having heard, they did not accept. And for that judgment the Gospel must be preached, and is preached, as well as for the saving of them that believe. Therefore we must preach it, whether men will hear or forbear.

E. N.

SIGNIFICANT ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

"When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isa. 26 : 9.

God will not be without His witnesses. Even amid the greatest corruption and degeneracy, there will still be some, who will not bow the knee to Baal, and who will boldly confess the Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom. And, no doubt, the nearer we approach the end, the greater the corruption and degeneracy will become, and the more will those who love the Master, but have not accepted the doctrine of His speedy personal coming, be made to see and feel that the time is at hand.

This idea was forcibly suggested a few days ago, at a conference of ministers, as a certain brother, who would not see previously any merit in this momentous subject, and who still hoped that there would be a turn in human affairs, when things would grow brighter and better, made the following acknowledgment: "Although I cannot subscribe to the prophetic views put forth by Dr. Seiss and others, yet I firmly believe there is much more truth in their teachings than many of us have believed. For it cannot be denied, that things all around us, in the church and out of it, are growing worse and worse, and darker and darker, every day; and I see no earthly hope that they will get any better. Things are becoming truly awful." To this another brother, who had been still more bitter against these Advent views, replied: "This dreadful state of things is only fulfilling the Saviour's words: 'Broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and *many* there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.' And 'as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be;' and thus it will continue up to the time of the end when the Master shall come."

These brethren have thus been forced to confess the truth against their own theories and hopes. God grant that many more ministers of the Gospel may be led to discern the signs of the times, and to give the trumpet a sound which shall not be mistakable! F.

WATCHING.

I'm watching for the Bridegroom,
He is coming o'er the height;
Each day brings Him nearer, nearer,
He is almost now in sight.
How my joyous spirit boundeth,—
How my heart thrills with delight,—
To the nuptials, ready virgins,
He has brought you robes of white.

Oft I've watched, and oft I've fainted
For the coming of the King;
Now let living and let sainted
Make their acclamations ring!
He has come His Bride to shelter
From the tribulation's storm;
Foes may in their life-blood welter,
But *she's* on His bosom warm.

And she's safe in His "pavilion,"
In the blue, ethereal dome,
And with loving words she'll welcome
Virgins to her royal home.
Now the wedding feast is ready,
All the Bridegroom's friends—no more—
Bring within the crystal portal,
And forever close the door.

Digitized by Google

And she's joined in heart forever
With her Husband and her Lord;
She will reign coequal ever
With the One so long adored.

And so I watch and so I pray
For fulfilment of the Word,
And ever with his "servant" say,
"Come now quickly, dearest Lord."

M. E. S.

Selections.

WHO IS THE KING OF GLORY?

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord."—JAMES 5 : 7.

THE day comes when all the new creation shall know the Lord "from the least to the greatest;" but in this creation, one must say, even to his brother, "Know the Lord—the King of glory!" Holy Scripture owns "the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge: for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2:2, 3, 9.) "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." (Heb. 23:8.) It more fully reveals Him in the offices of prophet, priest, and king. Our prophet himself dwelt among men in the flesh, and taught by His word and example the things concerning His kingdom. He closed His ministry in death, offering Himself, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1 : 29.) Having poured out His life-blood for the remission of our sins, on the third day He rose from the dead, and after forty days he was exalted by the right hand of God, "to be a prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Ordained a priest forever after the order of Melchizedeck, God said, "Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." (Ps. 110 : 1, 4.) There He ever liveth, our righteous advocate and intercessor, our High Priest, to present our offerings and sacrifices, of prayer and confession, of thanksgiving and praise, and to obtain for us our requests; "a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people: for in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." (Heb. 2:17.)

Because "Jesus Christ is gone into Heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him" (1 Pet. 3:22); and we see Him not; many have no distinct idea of His present office in the ministry of reconciliation.

Overlooking the office of Mediator, they regard Him as seated on His *promised* throne, and now governing the chosen people, whereas, ever present with them by His Spirit, He ministers for them in Heaven; "from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool." We do not yet see these enemies—sin, death, and Satan—put under His feet; "now we see not yet all things put under Him;" but in the time appointed of the Father, we shall. When the elect are gathered in, and the body of which Christ is the glorified head is once accomplished, and the holy temple of which He is both corner and headstone is completed in the Heavenly places, then the Son of man who came into this world to suffer and die, who ascended into Heaven to justify and save His people, will come again to cleanse the earth, to crush the serpent's head, to destroy his goods, and to reign over the new creation.

He was our prophet while in the flesh of Adam; He is our High Priest while our advocate with the Father, waiting for His foes to be made his footstool. He is "the first born among many brethren," the mediator and surety of a better covenant which He will make with them who follow to victory through death; and He is coming again to reign over the children of God forever, "and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Moses and all the

Digitized by Google

prophets testify that in Christ the promised seed, all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. Of Him, Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying: "Behold the Lord cometh with myriads of His saints to execute judgment upon all." (Jude 14.) The angels declare that "this same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven." (Acts 1: 11.) When His mediatorial work is done—when "the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled"—when all Israel of the faith of Christ shall be saved, and "the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you," then "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet, shortly" (Rom. 26: 20), and Jesus Christ shall come in the glory of His Father, and all the Holy angels with Him, and shall sit on the throne of His Father David, appointed for Him, and shall give to His Apostles the throne He has appointed for them; "that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom" (Luke 22: 30), and "sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne." (Rev. 3: 21.) As it is written: "Thou art my Son, I will give thee the Gentiles for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Ps. 2: 8.) Jesus, our nobleman, has gone into Heaven, to receive the kingdom and to return; and having received he *will* return, and reckon with His servants, the whole race of Adam in the great day of account. (Luke 29: 12, 15.) From that time forth He will wait no longer, suffering for salvation and expecting. He will take to Himself His great power, and will reign. (Rev. 11: 17.) He will destroy "that wicked, the man of sin, the son of perdition," and "gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are in earth." (Eph. 1: 10.) His dominion shall be "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth;" not in this its fallen state under the curse, but in its future regenerate state, in which all its families shall be forever blessed in Him—Jesus Christ. He is the King of glory.—*Cor. of Episcopalian.*

THE SIN OF WITCHCRAFT.

A WORD FOR OUR TIMES.

"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them."—ISAIAH 8: 19, 20.

THIS admonition is found in a prophecy that pertains to the Gospel dispensation. For the preceding verse, which reads, "Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts that dwelleth in Mount Zion," is quoted in Heb. 2–13, and applied to Christ and the New Testament Church. Thus we read, verses 11–14: "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call th m brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil."

And it is worthy of notice, that in verse 16, which reads, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples," the term *disciples* is used, which is the common designation in the New Testament of a follower of Jesus, though it is not found elsewhere in the Old Testament. The force of this expression, as pointing us to New Testament times, is seen in the fact that He who uses this term, "my disciples," is evidently our Lord Jesus Christ.

A further proof that this passage relates to the New Testament dispensation, is found in the fact that the "stone of stumbling" and the "rock of offence" of verse 14, which reads, "And he shall be for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence," is our divine Redeemer. For thus the New Testament applies this verse, which it blends in quotation with Isaiah 28: 16, giving the language of both in one. Thus:

Digitized by Google

Rom. 9:33. "As it is written, Behold I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and a rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

1 Pet. 2:7, 8. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed."

Another evidence that this prophecy of Isaiah pertains to the Gospel dispensation, is found in the fact that the next verse, which says that many shall "stumble and fall and be broken," is applied in the texts last quoted, or in their connection, to those who reject Christ. Thus Paul says of those who stumble at Christ crucified (Rom. 9:32), "They stumbled at that stumbling-stone."

It thus appears that the admonition of Isaiah 8:19, 20, belongs to the New Testament dispensation. A further study of the connection will establish the fact that it was designed especially for the last days of this dispensation, when the disciples of Christ are waiting upon the Lord and looking for Him. For the prophet, who personates in this chapter sometimes the Lord and sometimes His people, says in verse 17, "I will wait upon the Lord [Douay Bible, 'for the Lord'] that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him." The New Testament Church was commanded not to look for that event till the Roman Antichrist should have his predicted period of exaltation. (2 Thess. 2.) But when the tribulation of those days should expire, the Saviour promised that the signs of His second advent should begin to be seen, and the saints were then to look and wait for their returning Lord.

Thus we are instructed:

Matt. 24:32, 33. "Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; when his branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."

Luke 21:25–31. "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, THEN look up, and lift your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. And he spake to them a parable: Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

Luke 12:35, 36. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh they may open unto him immediately."

Zeph. 3:8. "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy."

Heb. 9:28. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Isa. 25:9. "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

The prophecy of Isaiah 8:17–22, in which the waiting position of the Church is designated, has reference therefore to that period immediately preceding the advent of the Saviour. He has proved a stone of stumbling to worldly professors, whether His first or second advent be considered. And it is from this class that He hides His face.

Another clue to the time of the fulfilment of this prophecy is found in the work which it assigns the Church: "Bind up the testimony,

Digitized by Google

seal the law among my disciples." Verse 16. We know that the Man of Sin was to oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God, and to think to change times and laws. (Dan. 7:25; 2 Thess. 2.) And we know that the law of God and the precepts of Christ have been wickedly mangled by the great Antichristian power. We know also that it is the work of the third angel of Rev. 14, in the period of the saints' patience, to raise up a people that shall keep all the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. And we know also that the remnant of the Church, in the end of this dispensation, is to be warred upon by the dragon because they keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Rev. 12:17.) This work of binding up the testimony and sealing the law among the disciples of Christ, is the very work of the third angel. This law and testimony thus restored to the people of God, is that to which they are to appeal in their final conflict with the familiar spirits. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Verse 20.

We cannot doubt, therefore, that the admonition of Isaiah 8:19, 20, respecting the familiar spirits, pertains to the time in which we now live, when the unclean spirits are making preparation for the battle of the great day of God Almighty. (Rev. 16.)

And when the prophet says of them that seek to familiar spirits, "They shall pass through it, hardly bestead and hungry; and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward" (Isaiah 8:21), he fitly describes the famine predicted in the following passage:

Amos 8:11, 12. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord; and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it."

And when Isaiah adds: "And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness," verse 22, he speaks of their dreadful anguish in the battle of the great day, and of their final destruction in the outer darkness. (Jude 13.)

THE SAVIOUR'S COMING.

"They shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, look up and rejoice, for your redemption is nigh."

COMING!—The Son of man really coming—coming into *this* world again with power and great glory? Will this ever happen? Will this solid, common-place earth see it? Will these skies brighten and flash, and upturned faces in this city see Him coming?

So our minister preached, in a solemn sermon; and for moments, at times, I felt a thrill of reality in hearing. But as the well-dressed crowd passed down the aisle, my neighbor whispered to me not to forget the meeting of the bank directors on Monday evening; and Mrs. G. poured into my wife's ear a charge not to forget her Thursday receptions; and my wife, as she came out, asked me if I had observed the extravagant toilet of Mrs. P.

"*So* absurd," she said, "when her income, I know, cannot be half what ours is, and I *never* think of sending to Paris for my things—I should look on it as morally wrong!"

I spoke of the sermon. "Yes," said my wife, "what a sermon!—so solemn. I wonder that all New York is not drawn to hear our rector. What could be more powerful than such discourses? My dear, by-the-by, *don't* forget to change Mary's opal ring for a diamond one—dear me! The Christmas presents were all so on my mind that I was thinking of them every now and then in church—and that was *so* wrong of me!"

"My dear," said I, "sometimes it seems to me as if all our life were unreal. We go to church, and the things that we hear are either true or false. If they are true, what things they are! For instance, these advent sermons. If we are looking for *that* coming, we ought somehow to feel and live differently from what we do! Do we really believe what we hear in church, or is it a painted dream?"

Digitized by Google

"I *do* believe," said my wife earnestly—(she is a good woman, my wife)—"yes, I *do* believe; but it is just as you say—oh dear! I feel as if I am very worldly—I have so many things to think of!" And she sighed.

So did I; for I knew that I, too, was very worldly. After a pause I said:

"Suppose Christ should really come this Christmas—and it should begin to be authoritatively announced that He would be in the city that day?"

"I think," said my wife, "there would be some embarrassment on the part of our great men, legislators and chief councillors, in anticipation of a personal interview. Fancy a meeting of the city council to arrange a reception of the Lord Jesus Christ!"

"Perhaps," said I, "He would refuse all offers of the rich and great. Perhaps our fashionable churches would plead for his presence in vain. He would not be in palaces."

"Oh!" said my wife earnestly, "if I thought our money separates us from Him, I would give it *all*—yes, *all*—might I only see Him one hour."

She spoke from the bottom of her heart, and for a moment her face was glorified.

"You *will* see Him some day," said I, "and the money that we are willing to give up at a word from Him will not keep Him from us."

That evening the thoughts of the waking hours mirrored themselves in a dream.

I seemed to be out walking in the streets of New York, and to be conscious of a strange, vague sense of *something* just declared, of which all were speaking with a suppressed air of mysterious voices.

There was a stir of hush—a whispering stillness all around. Groups of men stand at the corners of the street, and discuss an impending something with suppressed voices.

I heard one say to another, "*Really* coming? What? To-morrow?" And others said, "Yes, to-morrow He will be here."

It was night. Suddenly, as I walked, an angel form was with me, gliding softly by my side.

Yet, though I felt awe, I felt a sort of confiding love as I said, "Tell me—is it really true? *Is* Christ coming?"

"He is," said the angel; "to-morrow He will be here!"

"What joy!" I cried.

"Is it joy?" said the angel. "Alas, to many in this city it is only terror. Come with me."

In a moment I seemed to be standing with him in a parlor of one of the chief palaces of New York. A stout, florid, bald-headed man was seated at a table covered with papers which he was sorting over with nervous anxiety, muttering to himself as he did so. On a sofa lay a delicate, sad-looking woman, her emaciated hands clasped over a little book. The room was, in all its appointments, a witness of boundless wealth. Gold, and silver, and gems, and foreign furniture, and costly pictures, and articles of *virtu*—everything that money could buy was heaped together; and yet the man himself seemed to me to have been neither elevated nor refined by the confluence of all these treasures. He seemed nervous and uneasy. He wiped the sweat from his brow, and spoke.

"I don't know, wife, how you feel, but I don't like this news. I don't understand it. It puts a stop to everything that I know anything about."

"O John," said the woman, turning towards him a face pale and fervent, and clasping her hands, "how can you say so?" And as she spoke I could see breaking out above her head a tremulous light.

"Well, Mary, it's the truth. I don't care if I say it. I don't want to meet—well, I wish He would put it off! What does He want of me? I'd be willing to make over—well, three millions, to found a hospital, if He'd be satisfied and let me go. Yes, I'd give three millions—to buy off from to-morrow."

"Is He not our best Friend?"

"Best Friend!" said the man with a look of half fright, half anger. "Mary, you don't know what you're talking about! You know I always hated those things. There's no use in it; I can't see into them. In fact, I *hate* them."

"Why, look here," he added, pointing to the papers; "here is what stands for millions! To-

Digitized by Google

night it's mine, and to-morrow it will be all so much waste paper, and then what have I left? Do you think I can rejoice? I'd give half; I'd give—yes, *the whole, not* to have Him come these hundred years."

Again the scene was changed. We stood together in a little low attic, lighted by one small lamp—how poor it was—a broken table, a rickety chair, a bed in the corner—where the little ones were cuddling close to one another for warmth. Poor things, the air was so frosty that their breath congealed upon the bed-clothes, as they talked in soft, baby voices. "When mother comes she will bring us some supper," they said. "But I'm so cold!" said the little outsider. "Get in the middle, then," said the other two, "and we'll warm you. Mother promised she'd make a fire when she came in if that man would pay her." "What a bad man he is," said the oldest boy; "he never pays mother if he can help it."

Just then the door opened, and a pale, thin woman came in, laden with packages.

She laid all down and came to her children's bed, clasping their hands in a rapture.

"Joy! joy! children, O joy! joy! Christ is coming! He will be here to-morrow."

Every little bird in the nest was up, and the little arms around the mother's neck; the children believed at once. They had heard of the good Jesus, He had been their mother's only friend through many a cold and hungry day, and they doubted not He was coming.

"O mother, will He take us? He will, won't He?"

"Yes, yes, my little ones," she said softly, smiling to herself; "'He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom.'"

Suddenly again, as by the slide of a magic lantern, another scene was present.

We stood in another room, where a woman was sitting with her head bowed on her hands. Alone, forsaken, slandered, she was in bitterness of spirit. Hard, cruel tongues had spoken her name with vile assertions, and a thoughtless world had believed. There had been a babble of accusations, a crowd to rejoice in iniquity, and few to pity. She thought herself alone, and she spoke: "Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity. Thou art my strong refuge."

In a moment the angel touched her. "My sister," he said, "be of good cheer. Christ will be here *to-morrow*."

She started up with her hands clasped, her eyes bright, her whole form dilated, as she seemed to look into the heavens, and said with rapture—

"Come, Lord, and judge me, for Thou knowest me altogether. Come, Son of Mary, in Thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded. Oh! for the judgment-seat of Christ!"

Again, I stood in a brilliant room, full of luxuries. Three or four fair women were standing, pensively talking with each other. Their apartment was bestrewn with jewelry, laces, silks, velvets, and every fanciful elegance of fashion; but they looked troubled.

"This seems to me really awful," said one, with a suppressed sigh. "What troubles me is, I know so little about it."

"Yes," said another, "and it puts a stop so to everything! Of what use will all these be to-morrow?"

There was a poor seamstress in the corner of the room, who now spoke. "We shall be ever with the Lord," she said.

"I'm sure I don't know what that can mean," said the first speaker with a kind of a shudder, "it seems rather fearful."

"Well," said the other, "it seems so sudden—to change all at once from this to that other life."

"It is enough *to be with Him*," said the poor woman. "Oh, I have so longed for it!"

"Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

Dies Iræ! dies illa.
Solvet sæclum in favilla.
Teste David cum sybilla.

Quantus tremor est futurus,
Quando Judex est venturus,
Omne stricte discussurus!

Tuba, mira spargens sonum
Per sepulchra regionum,
Coget omnes ante thronum!

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS.

"PLEASE write an article on the '*Sheep and Goats*' of Matt. 25. I am compelled to think that these are distinct from the 'Elect Church'—and that they are really the nations that are spared to the 'life of the age,' or Aionian life, over whom Christ and the saints reign. I may be mistaken. Please write on the subject."

So a friend requests. Not having the leisure to give full attention to the subject, we reprint the following from an English publication, which is at least suggestive.

What are the facts? There is no mention of *resurrection* in the context; the people living on the earth when Jesus Christ shall set his feet on Mount Olivet are the sheep and the goats spoken of in this passage. Men in fleshly bodies are referred to, and none else. The entire discourse refers to Christ's return, and the allusions and references are so purely Jewish, that the disciples could not fail to understand him.

I. Who are the *persons judged?* You will find them described in Joel iii. 2. "I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehosaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." The Septuagint uses the very words of Matthew, *pánta tà êthnē*, "all nations," all the heathen. Now look at Isaiah x. 20, 21: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them, but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God." Clearly our Lord is describing the time when the controversy of Sion shall be settled, and if you just look at what he says in the chapter we have read, you will see this. Inasmuch as ye did it, or did it not, to one of these my brethren, who are described as sick, as imprisoned, as hungered, as athirst, as naked, and as deeply afflicted, ye have done it, or not done it, unto me. He is speaking of his Jewish brethren, the remnant of Israel that have turned to the Lord, and that have dared to refuse to worship the Antichrist The enemies of God on the one hand, and the persecuted Jews on the other, are obviously referred to in the seventy-ninth and hundred and second Psalms. "Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God? let him be known among the heathen in our sight by the revenging of the blood of thy servants which is shed. Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to die." (Ps. lxxix. 10, 11.) "For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death; to declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem; when the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord." (Ps. cii. 19–22.)

Now then we have the triumph of Antichrist, and the picture of the small, faithful remnant who refuse to worship him and receive his mark on their foreheads; we see many in dungeons, "appointed to die." The mandate has gone forth from the cruel king, that no one shall relieve them under penalty of death; but Christ says to the righteous, "You have relieved those who were in prison, your suffering, tortured brethren, and now I have heard the sighing of the prisoner, and have come to deliver him." This is the time described in Rev. vi. 16, 17, when the panic-stricken foes of the Lord shall call to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

Christ has come to open the prison-houses

Digitized by Google

of Judea, and other parts of the world over which the blaspheming Antichrist has had power, and he deals with nations, the representatives of the world who shall be present at that time; he calls them before him, and he deals with them as the Shepherd-King of Israel, who has come to his throne. He sets the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left.

II. Now we come to the *sentence*. The language is distinctly Jewish, and refers to matters which the Lord's hearers would easily understand. Christ does not speak about the church to these Jews, because at that time it did not exist, and they would not have understood him. Look at Isaiah lxvi. 15, 16: "For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many." Passing over the next few verses, read the twenty-fourth: "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." Go a little further, down to Malachi, and we see the effect of fire upon these impious men: "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." (Malachi iv. 1, 3.) There is no mention of "resurrection." It is manifestly the judgment of the living.

III. *The place of execution.* "When the Lord comes and sits upon his glorious throne, he will gather all nations before him." If you take the great men and the chief captains who shall be there by order of the Antichrist, you have the representatives of the heathens. The time for that judgment may be very brief, but if you like to prolong the thought, you may well imagine that the nations are shortening the period that will elapse, that telegraphs and railroads are hastening the time when the true king of humanity shall be on his throne, and put down all evil. You will not understand this subject unless you believe in Jesus Christ as king sitting upon his throne of glory. From the Mount of Olives, where he is to appear, on his left (to the south of Jerusalem) stretches a long valley, the valley of the Son of Hinnom. The god of the Ammonites (named Molech) was worshipped in that valley of the Son of Hinnom. Now, God had strictly forbidden the Israelites to pass their children through the fire to Molech, but they did it frequently, notwithstanding. Solomon had built a temple to Molech, to please his heathen wives. In a part of the valley of the Son of Hinnom, the prophet locates Tophet, which comes from Toph, meaning a drum, a drum being beaten to prevent the screams of the children from being heard, whilst they were being branded. Amon, Manasseh's son, was equally wicked, but his grandson, Josiah, worshipped God. Search the book of Kings, and you will find all this, for I go by my brief. Josiah defiled the valley of Tophet, to prevent the horrid rites of Molech.

When the Lord comes, his adversaries will be consumed, and, as if to put the everlasting brand of infamy on the wickedness of men who sacrificed to the horrible god Molech, the spot on which they did so is selected as the place of execution, where the enemies of the great King, who are found in open rebellion against him at his coming, will be destroyed by fire. The scene of condemnation is close by the future capital of the whole world. The place of execution is this valley of the Son of Hinnom. I give you this rapid sketch to show *that this scene relates to the living wicked* at the time of the Lord's visible revelation, and not to men raised from the dead.

SCIENCE AT FAULT AGAIN.

A GREAT deal of obloquy is heaped upon those who are found to give themselves serious concern about what God has predicted

Digitized by Google

to come to pass. It has become the custom of modern savans and wiseacres to ridicule and sneer at the students of sacred prophecy, and to set them down as fools, because, here and there, it has been found that some have anticipated events, in given times, which did not come. Because mistakes have been made by some, and the prophesyings of others have failed, therefore, it is assumed, that there is really nothing in the Scriptural predictions of the future, at least nothing that we can know beforehand, and that any attempt to make something out of them is evidence of a crazed brain, and mere fanaticism.

But, what is the reason that people will not reason in the same way against what is lauded and admired as sober science and wisdom? Some years ago, the astronomers and philosophers predicted a grand universal star-shower, and set themselves and the world on tiptoe of expectation with reference to it. Science swept out her dusty observatories, and brushed off the lenses of her instruments, and gathered together her confident professors. Institutions of learning everywhere made ready for the splendid and impressive exhibition. Watchmen and watch-women were stationed with pen and pencil for observations. Presidents of colleges, mayors of cities, and high authorities of all sorts everywhere, gave their commissions and orders touching what was to come to pass on the 14th of November, 1866. And the newspapers were busy for months in advance giving explanations and directions for a right understanding and enjoyment of the sublime celestial performance to come off at the given time. But, after all that was said, and done, and expended, the stellar performers failed to make their appearance, any more than on multitudes of other nights not foretold by the philosophers. The whole thing turned out to be a miscalculation — a mistake — a miserable blunder. The wisdom, the science, the calm and sober learning, to which we are called to pay reverence, had to hang its head; and the world's models of astuteness and sobriety, whose words we are to receive as oracles, and whose enlightened and philosophic judgment we are to accept over against all this stupid speculation about what God has revealed of things to come, had to confess themselves at fault.

Another specimen of this oracular wisdom of sober science has come under our notice. Herr Fall, a notable German astronomer and meteorologist, had been giving out certain prognostications of a very alarming character. He affirmed that a great earthquake was to occur within the past year, by which the whole continent of South America was not only to be terrifically shaken, but crumbled into dust, if not engulfed in the sea. In Peru, his predictions were so firmly believed, that, at the time fixed for the disastrous event, the inhabitants removed from the cities into the plains, and sat in terror awaiting the awful catastrophe. In Europe, also, the man's scientific announcements obtained such credence, that a large number of ships, bound from Bremen and Hamburg for South America, were detained until news should arrive as to how the thing had turned out. But it so happened, that no shaking whatever came to pass, and the Southern continent of America, with its appurtenances of cities, mountains, and plains, continues as usual. The philosopher's science was wholly at fault.

Now, we do not propose to discard science because of such blunders. We do not consider it a disgrace to scientific pursuits, nor a good reason for denouncing them as fanatical and unfit to occupy the time and energies of men with a genius for them. But we do claim, that such failures and mistakes on the part of our wise men, furnish a legitimate basis on which to demand a little more forbearance and respect toward those students of the Divine word who are persuaded that they have solid Scriptural warrant for certain doctrines concerning things that are yet to come to pass. What if mistakes have here and there been made? If our savans in the scientific world, who claim to have a monopoly of sober and solid wisdom, can be so sadly led astray in their interpretations of nature, and still have the respect of the community for themselves and their professions, is it not most uncharitable, illogical, and unjust, to rule the study of

Digitized by Google

sacred prophecy illegitimate and fanatical because some have erred in their interpretations of the Scriptures? We honor science for its efforts to get at the truth, and to make it of account for the welfare of mankind, even though it is often very far from the mark; but have we not a right to claim, on the same ground, similar respect and attention for honest and faithful attempts to search out the meaning of God's predictions, even though there have been instances in which texts and dates have been misapplied? We do not cry down all astronomers as fanatics and fools because some have too confidently misled the world in the matter of the falling stars in 1866, or in the matter of Herr Fall's earthquake which did not come to pass. These very mistakes are important items in the processes of reaching a true comprehension of such things. But neither should students of prophecy be condemned, because some have broached theories of interpretation which have miscarried. In the one case as in the other, the very error thus detected is argument for more diligent and profound investigation, and its explosion the further clearing of the way to the right understanding of the truth.

It is, at any rate, clear and settled, that a large part of Holy Scripture is made up of predictions which yet remain to be fulfilled. They have been divinely given to forewarn of what must come to pass in the course of God's mysterious providence. They are meant to inform and prepare us for what must prove infinitely disastrous to those who fail to perceive what has been written for our learning, and so are overtaken unawares. Is it not therefore our business, our Christian duty, our bounden obligation, to study these things, and to do what we can to have the church and the world awake to the things which must shortly come to pass? Blessed is he that shall be found watching.

PERE HYACINTHE ON PROPHECY.

Before the Peace League of Paris, on the 10th of July last, this distinguished preacher, whom Rome has made efforts to silence for his faithful testimony to the truth, and who has excited so much interest in the Protestant world, made the following remarks, which we quote with much pleasure. They show how great minds, when unprejudiced, are impressed with the scripturalness of our teachings. The eloquent speaker said:

In the present age of the world, universal and perpetual peace is only a chimera. In the age to come, it will be a reality. For my part, I have always believed—and now, in this assembly of my brethren, I don't mind telling the secret—I have always believed that in some nearer or remoter future, mankind would come, not to complete perfection, which does not belong to earth, but to that relative perfection which precedes and prepares for Heaven. After the fall of Jerusalem and Rome, and the predicted end of the ancient world, the primitive Christian, heirs of the promises of Jewish prophecy, did not expect immediately the beginning of the heavenly and eternal state, but a temporal reign of Jesus Christ and His saints, a regeneration and triumph of man upon the earth. I also look for this mysterious millennium, about which our errors of detail cannot shake the deep, unalterable truth. I look for it, and in the humble but faithful measure of my labors, my works, my prayers, I strive to prepare the way for it. I believe that nations as well as individuals shall some day taste the fruit of universal redemption by the Son of God made man. I believe that the law and the gospel shall reign over this whole planet. I believe that we—that you and I—shall see descending from heaven a manhood humbler and nobler, meeker and mightier, purer and more loving, in a word, greater than our own. "And this man shall be the peace!" *Et erit iste Pax.* (Micah 5: 5.)

Over the cradle of our Lord Jesus Christ the angels sung, in the majestic beauty of that Christmas night, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will to men." And over the tomb from which he rose, the cradle of His new life, Christ says himself, "I have overcome the world! My peace I give to you!" The future shall receive that promise of the

Digitized by Google

angels, and that gift of CHRIST—the double hosanna of his cradle and his tomb. The future is the inheritance, not of the violent, but of the gentle. Then shall be brought to pass that other saying, written among the words that shall never pass away, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

THE ANGEL-TRUMPETERS.

"And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets."—Rev. 8: 2.

NOT all angels are of the same dignity and office. Paul enumerates "dominions, principalities, and powers" among the celestial orders. Isaiah speaks of Seraphim—nobles—principal ones, who have their stations by the high and uplifted throne of the Divine majesty. The sons of God in general only come before Him at appointed times (Job. 1: 6), but the Saviour himself speaks of some angels who "do always behold the face of the Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 18: 10.) And the sublime agents which John beheld after the opening of the seventh seal, are described as "*the seven angels who stand in the presence of God.*"

The Jews were familiar with seven angels of this particular class. Gabriel is one of them; as he himself said to Zacharias: "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God." (Luke 1: 19.) Michael is another, as he is ranked with Gabriel in the book o Daniel, and there pronounced one of the princes, even "the great prince" of the prophet's people. In the Apocryphal book of Tobit, Raphael is named as still another, where he announces himself and says: "I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the holy One." Whether we take this book as inspired, as the Romanists do, or as not inspired, as the Protestants generally regard it, there is no matter with regard to this point. The passage referred to (Tob. 12: 15) shows what the ancient people of God held for truth, and the representation harmonizes with the text, and with the accepted books of holy scripture. The ancients believed in *seven presence-angels*, and the Apocalypse ratifies that belief.

These presence-angels are the highest and mightiest of created beings. It is their privilege to "stand in the presence of God." They *stand;* this is the posture of service; but standing *in the presence of God*, is to be above all other servants. The seven Persian princes who "saw the King's face," were the highest officers of the realm, and next to the monarch in rank and power. (Esth. 1: 14.) And what those princes were to the Persian Kings, the presence-angels are to God.

And these sublimest ministers of God appear here as the prime executors of the oncoming administrations. The Saviour himself said: "In the end of this world, the Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His Kindgdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire." (Matt. 13: 40–42.) And here John beholds those angels—the glorious septemvirate of celestial ir hregents, the mightiest and the highest creatures in the universe, presenting themselves for the momentous work.

"*And to them were given seven trumpets.*" Trumpets are expressive instruments. The voice of the trumpet is the most significant voice known to the holy scriptures. God himself gave his ancient people very special directions with regard to the use of the trumpet. It is itself described as *a cry*—a loud and mighty cry—which related only to important occasions. The time for the blowing of trumpets, was always a time of moment—a time of solemnity—a time for men to bestir themselves greatly in one way or another.

Trumpets connect with war. The command was: "If ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets." (Num. 10: 9.)

Trumpets were for the convocation of the people, and the moving of the camps of Israel. This is minutely prescribed in Num. 8.

Trumpets proclaimed the great festivals. "Ye shall blow with the trumpets over burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifice of your peace-offerings." "Ye shall have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation." "Thou shalt cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound, in the day of atonement shall ye make

Digitized by Google

the trumpet sound throughout the land." And so, "when the burnt-offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets." (Num. 10 : 10; Lev. 23 : 24; 25 : 9; 2 Chron. 29 : 27.)

Trumpets also related to the announcements of royalty. Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, were directed to anoint Solomon king over Israel, and blow with the trumpet, and say, God save King Solomon. It is also written: "They hasted greatly, . . and blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king." (1 Kings 1 : 34, 39; 2 Kings 9 : 13.)

Trumpets are also associated with the manifestation of the terrible majesty and power of God. When the Almighty appeared on Mount Sinai, there was "the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled."

Trumpets connect with the overthrow of the ungodly. It was at the blowing of the trumpets that the walls of Jericho fell down, and the city was given into the hands of Joshua. (Josh. 6 : 13–16.)

Trumpets also proclaimed the laying of the foundations of God's temple. (Esdras 3 : 10.)

With these facts before us, we are already in a degree prepared to anticipate what these seven trumpets are to bring forth. Their number is the complete number; and we may expect from them everything to which trumpets stand related in the Scriptures. Are they related to war? Then war is coming; yea, even "the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Are they for the calling of convocations and signals for motion? Then we may look for great gatherings and mighty changes. Do they herald great solemnities and blessed feasts and sacrifices? Then may we anticipate the sublimest festivals, and victories, and jubilee, and burning up of the victims of sin, that the world has ever yet seen. Do they declare investiture with dominion and the commencement of a new reign? Then may we look for the setting up of a new administration, and the opening of the reign of the true David, and the greater than Solomon. Do they declare the presence of God in His awful majesty? Then may we expect a revelation of Divine power and Godhead which shall fill heaven and earth with trembling. Do they bring the fall of the cities of the wicked, and the destruction of their inhabitants? Then we may look for the end of great Babylon, and the sweeping of the dominion of Antichrist and all his confederates from the earth. Do they tell of the founding and building of the permanent temple of the Lord? Then may we look for the incoming of that true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, and of that firmly founded city whose maker and builder is God. And all this accords entirely with what John subsequently describes as resultant from the sounding of these seven trumpets.

Writers on the Apocalypse generally treat it as if it depended for its imagery and materials upon the ancient Jewish regulations. They thus put the copy for the original, and deal with the original as if it were the copy. All the ancient regulations were nothing but copies and types. They were commanded to be made after some heavenly model, of which they were to be the remembrancers and prophecies. They were not the true—the real—but only earthly imitations of it. The true ideal is what John beholds in this book. These seven presence-angels, with their seven trumpets, are the true heavenly realities, with reference to which all the ancient laws relating to trumpets were ordained. What we here have is not the work of John, elaborating a dramatic poem out of the elements of the ancient ritual, but an Apocalypse of the great realities themselves, with reference to which those old appointments were constructed, as earthly pictures and mimic predictions. We go back to the ancient laws, and we there see reflected in earthly forms what John beholds in heavenly reality; and we reverse the whole order, and involve ourselves in inextricable confusion, when we take the images in his visions as mere earthly and Jewish drapery, and not rather as the very things from which these Jewish ceremonies took their existence and peculiarities. The Apocalypse is not a poem in Jewish dress; but the Jewish ceremonies were an earthly poem of the Apocalypse. Let this be understood, and much of the darkness hanging over the meaning of this book will at once disappear.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VIII. APRIL, 1870. No. 4.

Special Contributions.

THE CHERUBIM.

GEN. 3 : 24.

"THAT the Cherubim signify Angels, is a notion for which there is not the smallest foundation in the Scriptures."* "The Cherubim were not real beings, but symbolical forms of that which would be in after ages more fully developed, and in the end perfectly realized." "It was by means of hieroglyphics that the truths of God were, from the first, preached to mankind."

There is nothing more beautiful than the continuity of the Bible—the gems found in Genesis can be traced to their full development in Revelation, and of this unity, the Cherubim form a striking example. "John, in his vision, sees four living creatures, and these were the same that Ezekiel saw, which, he says, were the Cherubim." "In the visions of John, we find a further development of the idea belonging to these same cherubic forms. The four living creatures, unhappily rendered '*the four beasts*,' are distinct from the angels, and they seem to represent that highest style of life to which the redeemed Church attains in glory as one with Christ." What is that highest style of life but that subsequent to the resurrection? "The human face among those features would be a symbolic representation of the glorious coming One, and of the glory to which man should attain through him."

"The Cherubim were figurative representations of the Church, in which God dwells in the same manner as he dwelt in the Tabernacle in the tribes of Israel;"—"the cherubic emblems were symbolical of the glorified body of Christ—the Church." "Wherever we have descriptions of these forms, they are just so many illustrations to us, so many explanations of 'The Throne' (of which the mercy-seat was a type) wherever it was set, whether in Eden, in the Tabernacle, in the Temple, or in Heaven itself."

"Moses is instructed to make the Cherubim, without any description of the form; they being something definite, and previously well known,"—and, as these figures over the mercy-seat, formed a part of that law which is said to be "a shadow of good things *to come*," how could they represent angels? Angels were already in existence, but the glory of the Church is something yet "to come."

"The flaming sword was symbolic of the Divine law; 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.'"

"Turning every way," is the same word which the translators render, in Ezekiel 1 : 4, "infolding itself." God dwelt between the Cherubim (Ps. 80 : 1) and as this flame of a sword turned itself about—this flashing, brandished sword, symbolic of the Divine law—would it not smite that which dwelt between the cherubim—"the Glory"—the symbol of Christ (John 12 : 41) bringing to mind these words: "Awake, O sword?" (See Zech. 13 : 7.) If the Cherubim symbolize the Church, is it not the office of the Church to preach the Gospel (and what is the

* These quotation marks indicate *ideas borrowed*, though the exact words be not given.

Digitized by Google

Gospel but Christ crucified), and so point out a new way to the tree of life, thus "to keep the way *of* ("*to*" says Townsend) the tree of life."

While the present effect of the presence of the Cherubim and flaming sword at the gate of Eden, was mercifully to keep shut up the way to the literal tree of life, did not these symbols teach, at the same time, the opening of "a new and living way, through his flesh," to "life and immortality?" Thus has God from the beginning taught men through symbols, and there is not a more emphatic method of teaching!

Moses was told to make the Cherubim of the same piece of gold with the mercy-seat; this indicates a nearness to Christ, and an interest in the glories of His throne, not accorded to angels. (See Heb. 2:5, 11, 16, 17.)

If it be conceded that the living creatures seen by John are identical with the cherubim, John represents them as saying—"Thou hast redeemed us to God, and we shall reign on the earth;" blessings and glories peculiar to man!

The Saviour "opened the understanding of the Apostles, that they might understand the Scriptures." It may be imagined with what new delight they would read the Old Testament, and that in writing the New, their allusions to it would be many. This in some measure is known to be the case, but is the continual presence in their minds of what was "written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms," fully discerned?

Understanding the Glory to be the symbol of the risen Jesus, and the Cherubim on either side of the Glory to be typical of the risen, glorified Church—ever preserving by the glory that dwelt between, the idea of by whom that resurrection glory was attained—and that the gold of which the Cherubim were made for the holy of holies, signified perfect holiness; look at the words of Jude v. 24. Had not Jude the interior of the most holy place in his mind, when he wrote this? To deny this, would be to deny that he was an inspired Jew, taught by the Saviour the meaning of the beautiful symbols of the law.

May not John have had these same types in his mind when he said, "The Word was made flesh and *dwelt* among us, and we beheld his *Glory*." The Psalmist said, "Thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth." This glory did shine forth to seeing eyes, and hearing ears, and understanding hearts, when "the Word was made flesh"—and it will shine forth again when "the Lord, my God, shall come, and all the saints with thee."

The Cherubim on the mercy-seat had their faces turned toward the bright cloud that stood between them. Had not John this in his mind when he indited 1 John 1:1, 7. (See Lev. 16:14, 15.) If redeemed man stood on that mercy-seat this sprinkling of blood seems most appropriate! Also, in these precious words: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not *yet appear* what we shall be," the covering veils have not yet been removed that hide the holy of holies, but we know that when "He shall appear, we shall be *like Him*, for we shall *see Him* as He is." As nothing intervened between the Cherubim and the Glory, must they not have reflected the brilliancy of that bright cloud, as its light filled the sanctuary?

More instances might be adduced in proof that the contents of the Old Testament were ever in the minds of the writers of the New, and that "the Cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat," did not form an exception.

"Enoch, the seventh from Adam, said, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints." (Jude 14:15.) "We know not the number of the Cherubim—the word is plural—and there is every reason to suppose that these symbols, with the glory that dwelt between, remained at the east of Eden, for the instruction of the Antediluvians, until the flood." If so, Enoch both saw and understood. Why not? The same glory led the Israelites through the desert, and afterwards continued in the tabernacle and in the temple. (Ps. 90:1.) How grand the thought! How comforting the truth! God with His Church from the beginning and, Matt. 28:20, "to the end," and Rev. 21:23.

The symbolic teaching of the Bible is always in harmony with that expressed in words. In the Saviour's own words (Rev. 3:21), is there not an allusion to the Cherubim on the mercy-seat; an unfolding of the symbol? All that is

Digitized by Google

needful then, in order to understand a symbol, is to find, and apply to it, the word—teaching that corresponds with it; this is not so difficult as may be imagined. The symbol and its explanation are sometimes found in close contact.

After the fall of man, God expressed His love in a promise which was also a prophecy. In order to make this better understood, He at the same time, for the consolation of Adam and Eve, and their descendants until the flood, placed where all might see, symbols that taught the same blessed truth (if the Cherubim typify the Church); these "Figures" also hindering man from prolonging his days in sorrow. And in conjunction with all this, God instituted sacrifice, thereby more completely instructing man concerning the wonders of redemption. Thus in the slain Lamb he sees Christ crucified, in the glory (Ps. 80 : 1; Gen. 4 : 16) between the Cherubim, Christ risen, while the flaming sword corresponded to what John afterwards saw, "a Lamb as it *had been* slain," but now glorified, and in the cherubic emblems, the risen Church, one with Christ, both in suffering and in glory,—for the sword turned every way.

"If, as some suppose, and as the narrative seems to imply, the first family remained in the neighborhood of Eden, in the presence of the sword-like flame, it is by no means unlikely that this flame was regarded as the Shekinah, a symbol of the Divine presence, like the glory of the Lord in after times; and that the flame was darted therefrom to consume the accepted offerings." (Heb. 11 : 4; Lev. 9 : 24; 2 Chron. 7 : 1.) In this presence, worship was rendered, and sacrifices were offered, and from it the signs of the Divine complacency or displeasure were afforded—the Mosaical law was to a great extent a renewal of ancient patriarchal usages—probably it was from between the Cherubim that the Voice issued, which pronounced the doom of Cain.

How complete then was the revelation made to fallen man! He had words to remember and meditate upon, a typical duty to perform, and symbols to gaze upon, all harmonizing, all teaching the same blessed truth that "God is Love;" all showing that "Mercy and truth had met together, that righteousness and peace had kissed each other."

And as the cherubic forms represented the various orders of creation, so men were taught by these symbols that, when "the manifestation of the sons of God" shall take place, "the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Compare Rev. 5 : 10, 13.

See the tender love, pity, and condescension of God in thus instructing the early Church, and from the very first as to its future glory, and the coming blessedness of all created things!

In conclusion may I ask, Which is most beautiful, most instructive, most comforting, most in harmony with Scripture, or with the character of God—that the Cherubim should be understood to signify angels—or glorified man?

All allow that the holy of holies is a type of heaven. Who comes nearest to God there? Angels or the redeemed?

E. T.

CAUTION IN REFERENCE TO THE SUPPOSED DELAY OF CHRIST'S COMING.

WHAT an inestimable treasure is the Bible! It is God's word, given by inspiration of His Spirit, and is designed to make us wise unto salvation. It reveals the most valuable truths. It narrates the most astonishing facts. It contains the most encouraging promises. It imparts the most excellent counsel. It gives the most salutary warnings. In short, all that pertains to life and godliness is found here. No one ever made a greater mistake than to think he could do without the Bible; and yet many neglect the Bible, and trust to their own understanding. Human reason, without revelation, is an unlighted taper. Man by wisdom knows not God.

As a general thing man's wisdom is opposed to Divine revelation, both in respect to the past and the future. Man's wisdom rejects the Bible account of creation, of the introduction of moral evil, of the deluge, and other events

Digitized by Google

that are past. And, travelling into the future, blindly discards the light of prophecy and builds up a theory of its own.

One of the doctrines which has met with the most virulent opposition from the worldly wise, that has been most ridiculed by the skeptical, and treated with the greatest distrust and indifference by a secularized church, is the second advent and personal reign of Christ on earth; the believers in which are called Millenarians. And there is no other subject of prophecy about which we are more frequently cautioned in the word of God.

Paul, in Heb. 10 : 35–37, says, "cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." The Old Testament scriptures show that there were to be two comings of the promised One. The first to suffer, the second to reign. The scriptures relating to the first describe his birth, his humble condition, his rejection by Israel, his sufferings, his death, his resurrection and his ascension again to the right hand of God. These have been fulfilled. Their fulfilment is recorded in the New Testament. Those which relate to his second advent describe him as coming in the clouds of heaven, as appearing in glory, as attended by His saints and angels, as overcoming the powers of darkness, as taking the kingdom, sitting upon the throne of David, reigning over the house of Jacob, as worshipped by the nations, as subduing all things to His government, and reigning forever. These have not been fulfilled. They await their accomplishment in the future ages. The New Testament scriptures speak of the second coming of the same Jesus, in whom was fulfilled the Old Testament scriptures relating to the first advent, and speak of His coming again in terms similar to those of the Old Testament which relate to this event. It is also evident from their testimony that the Christians of the apostolic times looked for and anxiously desired the second coming of Jesus Christ; that they were taught to do so by the apostles themselves; that they were taught to do so as if the event were nigh at hand. They were told that yet a little while and He that shall come, will come and will not tarry. They were exhorted to sobriety and prayer, because the end of all things was at hand. To let their moderation be known to all men, for the Lord was at hand. To avoid avariciousness and worldlymindedness, because the Judge was at the door. To wait for the Son of God from heaven; and to be looking for and hastening unto the coming and appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This was set forth as the object of hope, because then the dead in Christ shall rise, and the living believers be changed, and their bodies being fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body, they shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. Then they shall be confirmed in holiness before God, and made kings and priests, be rewarded with eternal glory and reign with Christ. And they were admonished not to lose sight of this hope, nor to part with it because there might be some delay in its realization. There was danger here; but they were forewarned; and under all circumstances, and at all times, they had only to attend to the warning. The delay of Christ's coming might otherwise occasion presumption, impatience, or despair.

Presumption is to believe without evidence or authority; to affirm without proof. One form of presumption, common among professing Christians and expounders of the word of God, is to apply the Scriptures which speak of Christ's coming to other events. This is done by a method of exegesis termed the *allegorical* and *spiritualizing*, introduced by Origen in the third century, along with his modification of the Platonic theory, which he thereby grafted into Christianity. Nothing has been more pernicious in its effects upon the faith and practice of the churches. It did not take away the Bible itself, but it perverted its meaning and destroyed confidence in its simple verity. It imposed strange meanings upon its predictions, and so substituted error in place of truth. It brought on the dark ages and shut up the Bible from the people.

The Reformation gave us the Bible again;

Digitized by Google

but it failed efficiently to rectify the disorder of a false exegesis; and the ancient doctrines of the church find a hard struggle to gain a foothold. One reason is, that errors have been stereotyped in creeds, and invested by false authority with power over the faith of the people. Still some progress has been made, and many have received the testimony of Christ's second coming and are looking for His appearing. And I affectionately warn such against the following presumptions:

1. In applying the coming of Christ to the destruction of Jerusalem. Thus Mat. 24: 29–35, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." It is said by some that the event here predicted was the destruction of Jerusalem, and that the judgments then inflicted upon the Jews was a providential coming of Christ. And verse 34: "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled," is supposed to require such an interpretation. But this verse properly rendered requires no such wresting of the meaning. Jesus was speaking of a series of events then about to commence and extending to His second coming, and says, "This generation shall not pass till all these things—this course of events—*shall begin to be*," γενηται. And so during the lifetime of some then living the beginning took place in the destruction of Jerusalem predicted in verses 15–22. But that was only a beginning, to be followed by a long tribulation to the Jews, running parallel with the times of the Gentiles, as we find by Luke 21: 24. "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," πληρωθωσι completed. The times of the Gentiles is the gospel dispensation during which God is visiting them to take out of the Gentiles a people for His name. And during all this time the tribulation of the Jews is to continue. Hence the tribulation still continues. And the events predicted in Mat. 24: 29–30, do not take place until that tribulation comes to an end. The judgments which came upon the Jews in the destruction of Jerusalem, must have been a part of the tribulation spoken of; and if that is called a providential coming of Christ, then this coming was not *after* the tribulation, but was the tribulation itself: and this proves the fallacy of the exegesis. But this tribulation must end, and the end is nigh. Be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer.

2. In applying the coming of Christ to death. Thus Matt. 24: 44: "Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." And 1 Thes. 5: 23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," have been so applied. The first of these passages is found in immediate connection with the coming of the Son of Man already noticed, and which is to be after the tribulation of the Jews comes to an end, and admonishes us to be constantly prepared for that event, forasmuch as the time of it is not revealed. An admonition suited to all Christians in every age and place. The second passage is a prayer for the entire sanctification of believers, and their preservation unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is nothing in it to justify its application to death. The language of both passages is plain and simple. There is no ambiguity in the terms; no figure of speech; and by grammatical rules they can be understood only in the literal import. The spiritualistic sense is a perversion of their meaning.

3. In applying the second coming of Christ to the influences of the Spirit, as 2 Thes. 2: 8, "And then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming;" and Heb. 9: 27, 28. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that

Digitized by Google

look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." But there is no reason why we should understand the coming of Christ otherwise than of His second personal coming in either of these passages. The first relates to the consumption and destruction of the wicked one who has usurped the rights and prerogatives of God; and the consumption has been going on ever since the Reformation; but the destruction can be effected only by the second coming of Christ in power and great glory. The second is an argument drawn from the order of sacrifice on the day of atonement, that Christ our high priest did first suffer, then enter the holiest of all, and shall come again the second time to save His people. The appointment of men once to die, relates to the high priests who first offered sacrifice, and then, with the blood signifying a sacrificial death, entered the most holy place, to make atonement for the people, and afterwards returned and pronounced the judgment of remission on the waiting congregation of Israel. So Christ our high priest was once offered, and with His own blood entered the holiest of all in the heavens, to make atonement for us, and to them that look for Him and wait for Him from heaven, shall He appear the second time, no more to offer sacrifice for sin, but to redeem and glorify His saints. It is a presumption of a very serious character to change the meaning of God's word. Many perhaps do it ignorantly in unbelief, who otherwise have a high regard for the truth. But some wrest the Scriptures to their destruction.

4. Scoffers presume to scout the doctrine of Christ's second coming altogether, saying, "Where is the promise of His coming; for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." 2 Pet. 3: 3–9. They first assume that God has never in the past interposed in human affairs, and thence presume that he never will. This is the presumption of infidelity.

Impatience is inability to suffer delay. Jesus speaks of such in Matt. 24: 48–51, "But, and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth His coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the Lord of that servant shall come in a day, when he looketh not for Him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Then be not impatient, nor weary of waiting. God is long suffering toward a wicked world for the salvation of His elect people. And we have need of patience for the perfection of our Christian character, that whether we wake or sleep we may be accepted of Him. Patient waiting must accompany hopeful looking in all who steadfastly believe in the promise of His coming. Abraham believed in the promised inheritance of the land of Canaan, and he looked for a city which hath foundations whose maker and builder is God, and he waited patiently, and died waiting, not having received it, and he waits for it still. And all the dead in Christ died waiting, and still wait the appointed time till their change shall come. We belong to the waiting Church if we have the faith of Abraham.

Despair is loss of confidence, hopelessness, impatience pushed to purpose. It is a total rejection of the promise on account of the delay of fulfilment. Sometimes it sinks the soul into utter despondency; but more frequently turns the affections to the world, and seeks to compensate the loss of hope in a future life by making the most of the present in laying up treasure on earth; or indulging in its pleasures, or pursuing its honors. Like Esau, who sold his birthright to the promised inheritance for a mess of pottage, many in despair cast away their confidence in God, and only wake up to a sense of their loss when it is too late to repair it.

Let us, then, fortify our minds against all these evil tendencies, by considering the certainty of the event we look for. Christ will come again the second time. This is one of the most positive declarations of the Scriptures, and frequently reiterated. We are assured over and over again that He will come at the appointed time. A time fixed in the purpose of God, though not revealed to us. A time which is drawing nearer every day, and is coming on

Digitized by Google

an unbelieving world, and a secularized Church as a thief in the night. A time which will not be postponed. God has fixed it in accordance with his unerring foreknowledge, and nothing unforeseen can occur to cause him to change it. Then, again, God is faithful to his promises, and his word shall not fail of fulfilment, when the time for fulfilment comes. It may come soon. The long-expected event may be just ready to burst in all the suddenness of an electric flash upon the world. Let us be prepared for it, that it may not take us unawares. "Let us hold fast the profession of our hope without wavering; for He is faithful that promised; and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

J. G. W.

THE CHURCH TO HER ABSENT LORD.

Oh! Lord, Thy widowed one
Does only yearn for Thee;
She longs, as for the absent sun
The Arctic dwellers long to see!

In sackcloth and in tears,
She for the Bridegroom mourns;
In fasting and in gloomy fears,
She waits—till He, her Lord, returns.

Becomes it her to sport,
And laugh, and jest, and play;
He who usurps Thy throne to court,
While Thou dost tarry far away?

Is she a loyal bride
Who dallies with Thy foe,
Yet vowed to love Thee more than all beside,
And share Thine adverse fortune here below?

Oh no, her heart must weep,
Must mourn, and fast, and pray;
In sorrow lonely virgil keep,
Till night breaks into glorious day.

She sees e'en thro' the gloom
One rosy streak of light,
Which quickly shall Thy foes consume,
And bring to her Thy presence bright.

It glimmers from afar,
And crowns the distant hill;
And soon the coming Morning Star,
Her loving heart with joy will thrill.

Then she will wear her weeds
Until the Bridegroom come;
Until the gloomy night recedes,
And all His foes be overcome.

Then sing the festal song
In joy's most gladsome strain;
And then her nuptial robes she'll don,
And ne'er in sackcloth fast again.

M. E. S.

Selections.

MELANCTHON ON THE END OF THE WORLD.

When, definitely, this world and "the things in it," will come to an end (a matter, after all, of no great personal interest to the individual man), has ever been the vexing and vexed question of the curious, and to the solution of this problem they have, with immense labor, bent their powers of invention and calculation. It has not always, with these minds, been to the credit of the Scripture that it has not been clearer and more definite in this matter, to them of such deep interest; and they have generously and patiently, and with infinite resource of ingeniousness, sought to fill up this lack. It is to be frankly stated, however, that after all this well-meant labor of ages, we really do not yet know the date, and are obliged to limit ourselves to the great practical questions of eternal, all-absorbing interest, that lie in what God *has* revealed.

Wandering in September of last year, through the halls of the British Museum, we spent some time over the cases of "Books with Auto-

Digitized by Google

graphs," of eminent men and women. Our attention was arrested by a German Bible, in two volumes, the first with the autograph of Luther, the second with that of Melanchthon. Besides the name of *D. Martinus Lutherus*, there was but little in his autograph. That of Melanchthon, however, filled the fly-leaf. It is written in German—as German was written then, and by Melancthon, who was a master in Latin, and wrote well also in Greek, but was but a novice in German by the side of Luther. The autograph so interested us, that it was copied into the note-book. It is Melancthon's views on eschatology, and as it may be of interest to some of our readers,—at least as a curious relic of the past, we give here the translation:

"*The Prophecy of the Prophet Elias.*

"This world endures six thousand years; then it will be burned. Two thousand years it is waste (oed); two thousand years the law of Moses; two thousand years the day of the Messiah. And because of our sins, which are many and great, the years will be lessened, and will not have their full measure.

"Written in the year 1557 after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ of the Virgin Mary; and in the year from the creation of the world, 5519.

"From this number it is to be seen that this very inflammable world is not far from its end. May the only-blessed Son of God, Jesus Christ, in this bitter distress, mercifully keep, govern, and save with his protection his poor little flock.

"Written by the hand of Philip, 1557."

The periods made by Melanchthon are readily suggested to the mind, by the similitude of a *week*—a day being a thousand years; and that after the end of the week comes the Sabbath—the rest for the church of God, when "all things shall be made new." Suggestions, however, of this kind, however readily they offer themselves by examples, should be received with distrust, when they are not made by the Holy Spirit. It was a perpetual caution of the eminent Bengel, to his theological students: "*Ex*ponite, ne *im*ponatis;—*ex*pound the Scripture; do not *put things into it* from without." It is so easy to get up a fine, attractive, plausible theory *outside* of the Bible, and then to seek to fit it into it. Yet blessed is he who loves the appearing of our Lord, and whom the Master shall find, as a good servant, waiting for His coming!

IS IT A WHIM?

One of our exchanges has the following:

"The venerable Rev. Albert Barnes says that 'the world is becoming better every year, every month, every day.' Rev. Dr. Lord will have a twinge when he sees such a flat contradiction of his own pet whim that everything terrestrial is going to the bad at a high rate of speed."

What Christ and His inspired Apostles say on the subject. Shall we believe Mr. Barnes or follow them?

"Now the Spirit *speaketh expressly*, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." "*There shall come* in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." "Beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts." "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth [hindereth] will let [hinder], until he be taken out of the way; and then shall that wicked [or lawless one] be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall *destroy with the brightness of His coming:* even Him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness

Digitized by Google

of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved." "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come: for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof—from such turn away." "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." "Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, for when they shall say, Peace and safety: then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." "For as in the days that were before the Flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." "But *evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse,* deceiving and being deceived."—*Herald.*

THE ADVENT DOCTRINE.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Methodist Protestant* is giving a series of articles on "The Signs of the Times." If respecting some truths he resembles the one who, when his eyes were first opened, saw "men as trees walking," on other points he can see clearly. Here are some of his thoughts on the nature of our Lord's advent and of the effect of faith in its occurrence at no distant day:

"I do not propose to enter into any speculations as to the second advent of our Lord, but merely to suggest that the doctrine of His second coming to judge the earth in righteousness, and the people with His truth is as clearly revealed in His Word as any other doctrine whatever. Yet is it not almost totally ignored by the pulpit, the press, and the people? Who preaches it? Who of us live for it, work for it, long for it? Does it not exist in the public mind as a barren abstraction—as a far-distant possibility? What influence has it upon the lives, the labors, the efforts of Christians?

"Yes! 'This same Jesus whom ye now see ascend into the heavens, will in like manner come again.' In view of his confidence in this truth the Apostle holds up to view 'the crown which the Lord, the righteous Judge would give to him in that day,—and not to him only, but to all who love His appearing.'

"How many of us can be said to love His appearing?

"Alas! what countless thousands would dread it!

"To what myriads would it be of all things least desirable! And yet is there anything more certain? May God help us all to realize His second coming! Then will we be earnest, and unremitting in the work He has given us to do. Then will we strive, with agony, to enter in at the strait gate; then will we learn to work out our salvation with fear and trembling; then shall we learn the full value of that precious blood 'which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel,' and to confide implicitly in Him without whose mediation our own puny efforts must prove abortive. With our personal salvation thus assured, and looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord, we shall be stimulated to more earnest effort in behalf of all those who scoffingly shall ask, 'Where is now the promise of His coming?' We can only triumphantly point to the sure word of prophecy,—to the teachings of God's providences, but to the glorious hope, the earnest expectation, the love of His appearing which animates our own bosoms, and cheers our own hearts. We may refer them to 'the signs of the times.' These signs indicate the need, not only of a more thorough individual piety, but of much greater activity in every field of Christian enterprise. Were they rightly read and better understood the millions spent in show, in fashion, in intemperance and self-indulgence, would be diverted into the channels

Digitized by Google

of educational and missionary labor. There would be no necessity for the piteous appeals of college agents and missionary treasurers.

"And why should they not be thus read, and thus understood? Will not this same Jesus come again? And is not God daily teaching us by His 'signs' that the time is nigh, even at the door? Oh! brethren what fearful responsibilities are these latter days bringing upon us as the disciples of Jesus! Let us show that we feel their transcendent importance. . . . Let sect, and creed, and party, and faction be swallowed up in the love of our common Lord, and in the love of His appearing. He *will* appear and all His holy angels with Him. When? Do all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation? See 2 Peter, chap. 3d, throughout. True, 'of that day and of that hour knoweth no man,' but 'it cometh as a thief in the night;' 'what I say unto you, therefore, I say unto all, Watch.'"—*Herald.*

Editorial.

THE TRANSLATION.

MARTIN LUTHER, already, in his quaint old German, sang:

"Die aber noch das Leben ha'n,
Die wird der Herr, von Stunde an,
Verwandeln und verneuen."

Which may justly be rendered:

But those who still abide on earth,
Them shall the Lord, from that hour forth,
Translate to life immortal.

Much nearer are we now to this wondrous display of Divine omnipotence than was Luther in his day. And yet, what do we find? We find that whilst this is one of the few points in eschatology wherein the Church creeds remain scriptural and orthodox, its influence as an affair of the "practical business of life," has dwindled almost to zero. It is considered that none but "fanatics" or "visionary enthusiasts" look for it in *our* day; an age when the world is just "commencing" to make such mighty strides in "progress!" A declaration by which, however, we, whether or no, are involuntarily reminded of the days of Noah and Lot; when the business of life was in full blast until the day when Noah entered into the ark, and *the Lord shut him in.* Not even the churches, sunk as they are in Laodicean indifference, will believe that possibly, nay, even probably, the types of Enoch and Elijah will, in our day, be reproduced in living forms on a scale ten thousand times greater;—vast, magnificent, and overwhelming. Were Luther still with us, we feel well assured that his trumpet voice would cry aloud, and spare not, concerning what are in *our* days, the crying sins and the "present truth." And the burden of his testimony would certainly be "Maranatha;" yea, very probably, "Anathema Maranatha." Staupitzs, Spalatins, Frederics—would he find them? Alas!

But, "God is our refuge and strength;" a very present help in trouble, therefore will we not fear: though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled; though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. (Ps. 46:1, 3, comp. idem Rev. 6:14.)

And when God Himself speaks, what does He say? He saith: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish, for I work a work in your days; a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." (Acts 13:41.) He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. (Ps. 2:4, 6.)

Therefore, let not our readers follow the multitude to do evil. Let them ever remember, *the Lord is at hand.* Let them ever keep before their minds that the great present issue to all enlightened and expectant saints is, beyond all question, the rapture of the watching and ready ones into the presence of our Saviour—of those, we say, of whom He speaks

Digitized by Google

when He says that they shall be accounted worthy to *escape all these things* and to *stand before the Son of Man.*

Our meditations on the great things revealed concerning the day of the Lord are increasingly instructive and interesting, in proportion as the Spirit of God leads us better to comprehend the prophetic word; but at the present standpoint the nearing translation has an overshadowing interest, so far as we of "this generation" are personally concerned. For we know not at what moment the trumpet will sound, Jesus will call, and we be instantaneously transferred from earth into His glorious presence; leaving our "dough unleavened," and with our kneading troughs bound upon our shoulders,* because the King's business will require haste.

To ascertain the precise time of this marvellous transfer is, and will remain, impossible; because as a *snare* will it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth; and the day of the Lord will come *as a thief in the night.* Therefore, as the watching saints escape *all* the things that shall come to pass, they are, first of all, removed; and that is the signal (easily interpreted by the Virgins) that the day of the Lord has set in. But we feel assured, from the signs of the times laid down in the sacred Word, that it is near, that it hasteth greatly—that it is at the very doors. And the contemplation of it fills our souls with joy; with joy for which there are a thousand reasons. But the prominent one is the thought of being with our Saviour, and never more going out. To be sure, in His presence is, likewise, fulness of joy; and at His right hand are pleasures for evermore; but there is something even nearer to us. It is to be *with* Him, who is the bridegroom of our souls; who hath betrothed us into Himself in righteousness; who gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice, for a sweet-smelling savour unto God; who purchased us with His holy and precious blood, and with His innocent suffering and dying; who gave His all for us; who poured out his soul unto death for us. It is because that fellowship will then be completed, which we have with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ. It is because the needle follows the magnet. It is because herein is *love;* not that we loved God, but that He loved us. What are the coming mines of shining wealth, the strength of youth, the bloom of health—what are all joys—compared with the joy of being *at home with Jesus.*. We write for those who know that they are accepted in the Beloved, because with their whole souls they have embraced Him, their bridegroom Lord and God.

Beloved, how cold it is here! How lukewarm in the Church! How few can sympathize! It is as when Paul stood before Nero, at his first answer. Where are the bowels and mercies, the fellowship of the Spirit, the comfort of love? We seem to many as those who mock. "What will this babbler say?" "He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods." (Because he preached unto them Jesus and *the resurrection*) These that would turn the world (and the Church) upside down. But, oh! ye beloved waiting ones, towards you we feel as Paul towards his Corinthians:—our mouth is open unto *you*—our heart is enlarged. Now, for a recompense in the same, be ye also enlarged. May we all be found, even now, called, and chosen, and faithful!

We, brethren, are not in darkness,* that that day should overtake us as a thief. We have been instructed out of the word of the living God, who has solemnly declared that he never does anything without showing it to His servants, the prophets. Am. 3:7. Consequently, He has announced His intentions beforehand.

* And should we, in the judgment of our works (1 Cor. 3:13) be brought also to Mara, we shall find there too the bitter wood of the healing cross.

* To those of our subscribers who have not yet read it, we heartily recommend the volume of Seiss's "Lectures on the Apocalypse." Get it by all means. The writer of this heartily indorses every word of that admirable treatise. It is very instructive. The perusal of the lectures (as far as published) has been a feast to him. When we take their common sense views, how plain the book of the Revelation is! It is *men* who have mystified it by imagining that it is too mysterious to be understood. The mystery, however, is, how sensible people, in the light of the Saviour's express and repeated declarations in it, can think so.

Digitized by Google

We know what to expect, and we know that the time is here, though the precise moment is purposely and necessarily hid from our eyes, and will remain beyond mortal ken until its instantaneous arrival.

The word of God is like a vein of gold. It shines brightly, even on the very surface. But it is when we dig that we find more hidden treasure. It is when we "follow on" to know that we know the Lord, and trace the purpose, so far as revealed, of the wonderful and the counsellor;—glorious in praises—fearful in holiness—doing wonders—wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. "My son, if thou wilt receive my word, and hide my commandments with thee, so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom and apply thine heart to understanding: yea, if thou *criest after* knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding: if thou seekest for her as silver, and *searchest for her as for hid treasures;* then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For *the Lord* giveth wisdom; out of *His* mouth are knowledge and understanding." (Prov. 2.)

God always has given full warning before His judgments began. We might expect it to be so now, too; and so we find it. Apart from the all-sufficient plain predictions recorded in His sacred word, He has, of late years, with the multiplication of printing facilities, raised up a special testimony to long-neglected truths connected with the coming and reign on earth of the Lord Jesus. And when once the eagle saints shall have been taken, the universal church will testify to the near coming of the Lord, as the sound of many waters. And, finally, in those closing days of miracles and prodigies, the angel flying in mid-sky will give a wondrous visible (as well as audible) proclamation to every soul of man, that mercy may still be found, as the last sands of the Divine long-suffering are running out. At that time, men will walk by sight; but it will be in the midst of the fires of the judgment day. Then it will be said, "Glorify ye the Lord in the fires." (Is. 24: 15.*)

Of late years, we repeat, the Lord has raised up, in all parts of Christendom, a wondrous testimony to the truths connected with His advent. Few have a correct idea how widespread it has been. And even if it has penetrated to but few ears, comparatively, it has yet been within the reach of all; and in the absence of miraculous events, it is not in the nature of the case that it should attract universal attention. But it reaches the ear of faith and instructs the simple-minded watching ones everywhere. Those who will not walk, except by sight, will presently have miracles enough, that they may marvel; even the very same which the Son of God announced beforehand, and has sent and signified unto us by His servant, John. On the part of some, there has been an intense and unprecedented searching in the prophetic Word; and that, notwithstanding the Laodicean state of the Church generally, as well as the vast mass of error and chaff which Satan has poured on the great topic, and in which he would fain have buried it. Daniel's prophecy is verified (Dan. 12: 4) at least in part. There is an intense searching of the sacred record, and the knowledge of God's purposes is increased. And this is just as might have been expected. Against the deepening gloom the concentrated light shines out in bright relief.

And thus it always has been. As unbelief assumes gigantic proportions, the testimony to the truth is permitted to become more striking. Thus through Noah it was announced that there was a reprieve of 120 years. Through Lot the pressing message came, "The Lord will destroy this city." It was when Elijah was left alone, and the prophets of Baal were 450, that the fire from heaven fell and consumed the sacrifice and the water in the trenches. "Go forth to the Chaldeans," was the message of mercy, through the mouth of Jeremiah. "The kingdom of God is taken from you," was the solemn warning from the Lord Himself. And the word to Christendom now is, "If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee." And even to Belshazzar

* "When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning-grapes when the vintage is done." (God's Word.)

Digitized by Google

it was said, "*Mene.*" But that was his extremity.

The fact of the translation of the Eagles is plainly stated in some passages of the Holy Scriptures. It is a necessary inference from others. It is before a single seal is broken by the Lamb, the Divine *Goel*, in entering upon the redemption of His purchased possession, that the door is opened in heaven, and the Saviour's trumpet-voice is heard, calling, "Come up hither." And from the plan of the Apocalypse it is irrefragably demonstrable that none of the great events of the day of the Lord can transpire until the Eagles have "changed strength," and mounted up. (Is. 40; Luke 17; Matt. 24.)

And we expect this translation shortly, because everything indicates that the day of the Lord is at hand. The chronological dates, as far as they can be proximately ascertained, have expired. The state of the world and of the church is as was predicted. The times of the Gentiles are expiring, for marvellous is the change that has come over the position of the Jewish people after so many centuries of suffering. The signs among the nations and in nature have been fulfilling around us, as far as possible in the dim, but not less reliable, adumbration of the year-day fulfilment. The democratic, atheistic, and superstitious spirit of the day is evidently just about to usher on the stage the predicted confederacy of the ten kings in the Roman world, who will, at first, carry the great whore, and then, in the return wave, hate her, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

We have felt urged in spirit once more to draw the attention of those who, with us, study the prophetic word, to the important fact that we are not to look for any preintimation of the coming rapture, among the great events about to transpire in the church and in the world. For if we do, we shall be taken unawares; although, indeed, in any case, the call will be a surprise. The minutes are, as it were, lengthened into hours, while we, in momentary expectation, are, as it were, holding our breath; and, then, perhaps, just as something causes us to look aside for a single instant, the call comes. Let it be well heeded, then, that the church is not to look for anything else by way of premonition; not for the development of Antichrist; not for the covenant to be made by him with the Jews, in unbelief; not for the commencement of the great tribulation; not for the confederacy of the ten kings; not for the portents in the sky; not for the coming predicted unprecedented revolutions and wars; not for prodigies of any sort; not for the going forth of the church to meet the bridegroom; not for persecutions; not for the great revivals; not for the revived power of the papacy; not for anything further—but Jesus. Absolutely, positively, nothing but the *parousia;* the presence of Jesus, in the air in His pavilion cloud, Jesus only; for nothing, but for our being caught up, to *meet the Lord in the air.*

All this, we suppose, will silently take place. Indeed, the word our Lord uses (*παραλαμβανω, παραληφθησεται*) implies as much, when compared with other passages in the New Testament where it occurs. No one will see it but those in the air—the heavenly powers, and, perhaps, the Satanic. In the similar (we will not say parallel) passage of Rev. 12, the word used is "snatched," *ἡρπασθη.* For the Lord will come as a thief. Suddenly, in one day, his faithful, interpreting Josephs will be transferred from the scenes of their humiliation to the place of honor before the great throne, arrayed in vestures of fine linen, and made rulers over all that the King hath.

Stupendous change! Inconceivable exaltation! Inexpressible metamorphosis! This corruptible endued with incorruption, this mortal putting on immortality. Death *swallowed up* in victory! And all in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. For the Bridegroom *is in haste* to welcome the bride for whom He has been waiting, with Divine patience, *longer* than Jacob; and He *cuts short* the work in righteousness.

These, his early saints, will be born as the dew is born. For it is written in Ps. 110, of our Kingly Priest, our Melchizedek, that He has the dew of His youth.

It is well to be noted (and is often misunderstood by such as are not familiar with pro-

Digitized by Google

phetic subjects), that at His public appearing in flaming fire, the Lord Jesus does not fetch any of His saints. On the contrary, since we are told, both in Zachariah and in Thessalonians, that He will bring them *with* Him, they must previously have been removed from the earth, and not a single one left behind. His appearing in flaming fire is only in order, with the breath of His lips, to slay the wicked, at the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

We do well to observe that not only the Mosaic law, but likewise many, if not, indeed, all the narratives of the Old Testament contain, in the wondrous wisdom of God's providence, types of heavenly things, some of which (as *e. g.*, Esau's forfeiture) have several bearings. There are more narratives than that respecting Sara and Hagar, which are "an allegory." (Gal. 4.) Our Lord himself mentions the days of Noah and Lot, and Lot's wife, and Jonas the prophet. We find that the paschal lamb had its antitype at the appointed season of the year. We know that the Feast of Tabernacles will have its antitype, or an antitype in the millennial reign. And will not the true antitype of *Two Wave Loaves* yet be seen?* However, it is to be remarked, that as the presentation takes place before the Lord, and as we have no means of ascertaining how much time the preparation, and the adjudications before Christ's judgment seat will require, we are unable to draw any probable conclusions therefrom as to the time of the translation; and the Divine *dictum* remains, as before: "*Watch!* for ye know not when the time is." (Mark 13:33.)

Let us never forget then, beloved, that the Lord Jesus may come at any moment. Let us remember to be ever on the watch, as it were, ever on the tiptoe of expectation, looking for our Lord personally every hour!

It is the rapture itself which is the very first of the coming judgments, both for the translated saints themselves, who shall then stand at Christ's judgment-seat, to receive rewards according to their works, and for those who are left behind, sundered from them (Luke 12:46), and enduring in common with an unbelieving world, the first of the fierce blasts which the horsemen, sent by the living ones, bring upon the earth. For even the unprecedented revivals of religion, symbolized by the first rider on the white horse, are no less a judgment (though bringing copious streams of mercy); because they flow in the wake of the *forfeited blessing*. Oh! that men were wise! That they understood this! But those who venture to hint at it *now* are generally considered intellectually weak in one point, at least; or (to speak out plainly, what is in so many mouths), "crazy on the subject of prophecy;" and it is not long before there resound on every side derisive cries of "Aleh kereach."

But let us in nothing be moved from the hope of the gospel. It is the rapture itself which is the very first signal, preceding all other miraculous events, in the case of those who shall be counted worthy to escape *all* these things that shall come to pass, and to *stand before* the Son of Man. We have been led to see this with increasing clearness of late, and hope that our readers may be led to the same perception. Depend upon it, it is not only piety but sound philosophy, too, to be always looking out for nothing else than "the Son of God from heaven." This is what the Thessalonians were converted to; and their unsophisticated nature, being divinely taught, was wiser than all the scientific, theologic lucubrations of this boasted "age of progress." And how interesting to find, as the result of the profoundest searchings into the more sure word of prophecy (or if preferred, "the confirmed" βεβαιοτερον, prophetic word), and the most earnest prayers put up in Daniel's spirit, the very *same* which we heard in the beginning, viz.: the personal advent of the Lord Jesus for the comfort and deliverance of his waiting saints. It is *He Himself* who is the refuge when the blast of the terrible ones is a storm against the wall. Even the same which we heard in the beginning. And therefore it is, that both the Spirit and the Bride pray

* The ingathering in the commencement of the Christian Church, could not, we think, have been the antitype; because the calling of the Gentile Church was subsequent to the outpouring of the Holy Ghost; whereas, in the type of the Feast of Weeks, the two wave loaves are presented together.

Digitized by Google

"Come, Lord Jesus!" And if we have their mind we will do the same.

We repeat it: the *first* great event that will happen will be *the translation of the saints.* No wonder, then, that the waiting few have not yet witnessed the expected dissolution of the Turkish empire, the overthrow of the Papacy, or the development of Antichrist. There is still a restraint, as in Paul's time. The removal of the Eagles out of the midst must first take place. And when it does come, it will take the church at large by surprise; because it is not till after that that the Virgins go forth to meet the Bridegroom; and where, *then*, is the *Bride?* "My dove, my undefiled, is but one: she is the only one of her mother: she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her." "Or ever I was aware, my soul set me on the chariots of my willing people. *Return, return*, O Shulamite! Return, return, that we may look upon thee! What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of Mahanaim." "The virgins, her companions that follow her, shall be brought unto thee." These extracts are from that Divine Scripture which is given by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Is not this a correct juxtaposition?

At any rate, nothing can be plainer than that the location of the parable of the Ten Virgins is subsequent to the rapture of the Eagles. This is so plain from our Lord's words that we marvel we did not see it before we did. But it was with us as with those two who went to Emmaus; our eyes were holden until it pleased God to show us what He means by the Eagles, and to make it plain how this passage and others dovetail into the opening scene of the Apocalypse, and how the inspired statements elucidate each other.

As for the world, things will go on in it for the first few days subsequently to the rapture much as before, in all probability. At least there will be no change in the business and pursuits of the usual avocations, *until the rapidly following* religious fervor, and the unprecedented political revolutions will become the engrossing topics of the day. Even then, the "disputer of this world" will cling to his wisdom and look upon the startling drama then opening as only the necessary storm for "clearing the social atmosphere," so as to introduce that "regeneration of society" of which we continually hear, and one photograph of which we may find in Rev. 9:21!

If we have the true bridal spirit of expectant longing (which involves righteousness, purity, and fitness, flowing from Christ, and the fulness of His merits), then, to our apprehension, there is nothing between this hour and His glorious presence. There is nothing to be looked for by us; nothing to be awaited previously; nothing but waiting; only being ready; only doing what the Master commanded, viz., watching for Him.

The precise moment of His coming is fixed in the eternal counsels of the Father. It is to us uncertain, but there is no uncertainty about it except in our imperfect apprehension of it. And if, to us, it *tarry*, still let us wait for it. For hope that is *seen* is not hope. For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit, also, helpeth our infirmities.

There is more than one wave loaf. We who are living, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not have the precedence of them that sleep, but shall be caught up *together with* them into the air to meet the Lord. And here again, beloved, is most sweet and precious comfort for us. For though we should *die* (as some have, who have had a clear insight into this great theme, and one, at least, who contributed able and excellent papers to this serial), it makes no difference, so long as we had the true bridal spirit. For whatever indifference may, at any time, temporarily reign in the church, the Spirit always says, "Come!" and the *Bride*, too always echoes, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" And though the Shulamite is dual, the beloved, the undefiled, is *one*. Those, and those only, who died in this attitude, will share the same blessing with the living who are found in it.

There are, incontestably, *successive* translations of believers. There are the Elders and

Digitized by Google

the Living Ones. Then the great multitude that come out of the Great Tribulation. Then the rapture of Rev. 12. Then the harvest of the earth in Rev. 14, and the other company on the sea of glass, in Rev. 14. Also the 144,000 of Rev. 7 and 14.* As has been said in previous articles, the saints are taken in successive companies, as fast as they are prepared to leave all and welcome their Lord. For it is evident from the fact of the subsequent raptures, as just noted, that not even the sore trials of the opening scenes of the Great Tribulation, included in the first six seals, will have the effect of making all into Wise Virgins.

We are strongly inclined to believe that, with each company of translated ones will be a company of resurrected saints *corresponding to them*, for the statement in 1 Thess. 4 seems to be general. At any rate, not all the sleeping saints have part in the *opening* scene of the First Resurrection, when the Eagles are taken. For else the chief of the apostles, whose part in the First Resurrection was assured by the very fact of his mere saintship in common with all believers, could not have spoken, in Phil. 3, of his "out-resurrection" as an object of such earnest *desire*, and of such ardent pursuit, as *the prize* of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; nor exhorted such as would be *complete* (τελειος) to be like-minded.

It is absolutely certain that everything in the world and in the church is taking the shape in which, as we know from other Scriptures, the opening scenes of the Apocalypse find it. The translation of the saints, therefore, cannot be deferred more than a few years at most. And the probability is strong—we had almost said overwhelming—that it may take place any year—perhaps even this year, or this month, or this very day. Therefore, let us do what the Lord Jesus commands us—let us watch. Let us be expecting. Let us be ready.

We repeat, let us not be looking out for any other event to transpire first. Certain prominent political personages, whose career prophetic students watch with very great interest, and concerning whom they ponder whether it is in *them* that predicted Antichristian powers will find their embodiment, may or may not turn out what is expected. But these questions, though of exceeding interest, are not vital to *our hopes*. All the signs show that *our redemption draweth nigh*. Therefore let us daily wait for Jesus. His coming will be *as a thief*. We need expect no further intimation. So, then, let us hold fast to Him.

Once more, beloved, suffer the word of exhortation. To our ministering brethren in particular (though all may share in it), we would say, let us remember our Saviour's weighty sayings in Luke 12: 37 and 42–44, and the blessings held out there. Can there be a greater prospect than what is held out in verse 44? Let us watch the signs of the times, but only in order to try to catch through them the sound of the footsteps of our coming King. Let us look for nothing but Jesus; nothing but Jesus. Let us not be moved from the hope of the Gospel. Let us not hesitate to stand aloof from the prevailing Laodicean spirit of the churches—even if we should have to suffer for it, as before now. The true Matthews, if need be, when they are certain that it is Jesus who is calling, leave all and follow Him. The church will soon wake up.

Above all, let us cherish the true Philadelphian spirit. And the way is open for every needy sinner. Fall at His feet, in spirit, say "I believe," and worship Him. Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

O happy lot!
To dwell with Christ our Saviour!
There to behold His countenance forever!
In songs of joy His holy name to praise!
To thank Him for our blessed consummation!
And view His wounds—those pledges of salvation—
All pain and sorrow then forgot.

E. E. R.

* Increasing light in prophetic study shows these 144,000 to be Jews, as is plainly stated in the text itself. The fact that they are first fruits to God and the Lamb, was misapprehended by us formerly, in common with others. But they are not, as the English version has it, "the" first fruits, but only a first fruit—ἀπαρχη. There is no article in the Greek. They are a first fruit of the restored Jewish people, and not of the Church.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VIII. MAY, 1870. No. 5.

Special Contributions.

THE TRINITY OF EVIL.

THE DRAGON—THE BEAST—THE FALSE PROPHET.

In the 13th chapter of Revelation we have represented the rise of the last great form the power of this world shall assume before its rightful Lord comes to claim its sovereignty. Into this power there enters three elements, combined in this final and arrogant attempt to retain the dominion of the earth, which, as God hath sworn, shall be given to His Son.

THE DRAGON.

The prime agent in this blasphemous usurpation is the Dragon, "that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan." The personal enemy of God and man, who first beguiled Eve with his subtlety, and who has ever since been luring on the human race with that old lying promise "Ye shall be as God," now introduces his masterpiece of deception, and organizes mankind under the headship of his crowning representative, the virtual incarnation of himself, to whom he gives his power, and seat and great authority.

The term "dragon" is but one of many titles ascribed to Satan. He is also styled "roaring lion," "prince of the power of the air," "prince of this world," &c., &c. It would be interesting and profitable to inquire into the special significance of this term "dragon" in this connection. Here we cannot speak with confidence. We can only suggest.

In Isaiah 27 : 1, "Leviathan, the piercing serpent, even leviathan, that crooked serpent," seems to be identical with the "dragon that is in the sea" of the same verse. In the prophets such great world powers as Egypt and Babylon are compared to a dragon. (Jer. 51 : 34; Ezek. 29 : 3.) In the latter passage, the land of Pharoah "that lieth in the midst of his rivers," seems in the eye of the prophet like a coiled dragon. The malign and baleful power that ruled Egypt seemed like a huge monster, lying in folds along the banks of its great river. The land is, in the figure, identified with the power that ruled it. Now the world, since the fall, has been ruled by a malign and baleful power. To an observer, lifted as were Isaiah and St. John by the Spirit to the lofty stand-point of prophetic vision, the earth with its wide stretch of continents, lifting its huge bulk out of the waters, and lying in coils along the margins of its circumambient ocean, might furnish an original for this picture of leviathan, the dragon that is in the sea. Or rather, we might say, the baleful power that broods over the earth and causes sin to reign unto death from the frozen regions of the north, over the broad savannahs of the south, where exuberance of life but multiplies the seeds of death, resting like a shadow of gloom over all this vast stretch of continents, and of which the monstrous forms of creature life are a sort of incarnation, is the great dragon of apocalyptic vision. And this suggests that view of Satan's empire and work, of which we have so many traces in Scripture, which makes him the author of all physical evil. Who has imposed the yoke of bondage to corruption on the crea-

Digitized by Google

ture? Every great world power finds its basis in the material interests of men, and is the outgrowth of physical as well as moral forces. The conformation of the American continent, for example, the character of its climate, its aerial and magnetic currents are most influential in determining the character and destiny of the nation developed on its soil. May not the term "dragon" then represent to us that feature of Satan's power, by which he subsidizes the natural and material forces that rule in the earth to build up and perpetuate his kingdom of darkness. By means of these he compels men and nations to the service of the creature more than the Creator who is blessed forever. A little reflection will convince us that the development of individual and national life is largely controlled by these physical forces, and inasmuch as moral and physical evil is linked in with their agency, the author of all evil makes use of them in perpetuating the reign of sin and death. In this aspect of his baleful, blighting power, he is the "great dragon."

THE BEAST.

But this mighty power of evil, thus linked in with this physical system, now cursed with our curse, seeks expression and embodiment through that highest creature into whom its materials are moulded, and who was born to rule it. The lower order of creatures suffer under its yoke, but man, who, in body, is its child, and yet, in spirit, of a far higher lineage, is both servant and master in this domain. And yet sin has discrowned him as a monarch, and put him under the yoke of this world's prince, who would crown him king again if he will but worship him. Hence his efforts to exalt man in sin, and to organize and aggrandize the human race in proud apostasy from God. To these efforts, as they take shape in great empires and kingdoms of this world, the Word of God gives the name "beast." This term implies that these empires are of the earth, earthy. The "powers that be" are indeed ordained of God. Power and order are of God. But the forms these take on in this evil age are of Satan, and often like the government of Nero, are "ordained of God" rather to punish than to bless mankind. These powers are "beastly," because they are organized chiefly in reference to the creature wants and relations of men, and to provide for their material interests. Worldly powers act only in the natural sphere. They are wise only in "what they know naturally" (φυσικῶς) and in these things "as brute beasts they corrupt themselves." Hence "beast" is their uniform prophetic symbol.

But we learn, from both the visions of Daniel and John, that the power of this world, in its final forms, aspires to something higher. The human figure, "one like unto the Son of Man," is the scriptural representative of the Kingdom of God, the commonwealth of the future, which shall be His gift from Heaven, after men have rashly and vainly striven through all their experiments to achieve it for themselves. Hence, toward the last, we always find the Beast assuming the aspect and speaking the words of a man. The image of Nebuchadnezzar's vision, which in its parts represented successive empires, but in its totality the proud image of human greatness as it stands on the clay and iron feet of centralized power combined with democratic rule, this image is in the figure of a man—"the man of the earth" arrogating to himself its dominion, and, at the last, finding the basis of its power in that "mingling with the seed of men" which is the striking characteristic of governments in these last times.

In Daniel's vision of the four beasts, the same thing is more strikingly brought out. The phases of the same great world power down to the time when the Son of Man takes the kingdom, are represented under a vision of four beasts. But on the head of the fourth beast there arises a little horn, "with eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." Here the world power, the beast, is seen in its final form, taking on the semblance of manhood. That is, as we have said, governments now aspire to something higher than to provide for creature wants and relations. They assume to care for the intellectual and moral welfare of their sub-

Digitized by Google

jects. There is great human intelligence and foresight. The Beast is "humanized." Ah! but the "little horn" still is on the head of a beast, and is an offshoot from it. There is simulation and counterfeit of the Kingdom of God. But still the Beast has not and cannot become a man. It is of the earth. The Son of Man is in heaven. His kingdom is not a product of earth, not the highest and final development of human progress and intelligence. It is a revelation from heaven. It shall "come down from God out of heaven." Hence this final attempt to counterfeit it is the culmination of blasphemy—the world's flat denial that Jesus is the Christ—its final rejection of His claim as King and Restorer. And hence it is this last ripening of the world's evil, this most artful and pretentious form of its power, in which there is the most arrogant and skilful imitation of the office, work and kingly claim of Jesus, that provokes heaven's judicial intervention. The Lord arises to judge the earth.

The little horn of Daniel's vision is easily identified with the Beast of Rev. 13th. He also has a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. Daniel's vision is specially occupied with the relations of this last form of Gentile power to the Jews. When John sees it, a new element is introduced. A church has been gathered out of the world. This beast arrives at a world-wide dominion. The dragon gives him his seat, and power, and great authority. He has all the aid and resources which great knowledge of natural laws and great power to wield and control the forces of nature can give. The prince of this world (κοσμος) and "of the power of the air," subsidizes all the power acquired during his temporary usurpation in this domain to make this final experiment of the natural man to rear for himself a Kingdom of God on earth successful. All the wonders we see now enacting in the triumphs of the race over brute matter, and in the use of the subtle potencies of nature, by which the whole world is fast being clamped together with bands of steel and built up into one grand structure of intelligent manhood, with muscles of iron and wire nerves, along which to flash its thoughts, these are to be intensified and multiplied, until the world becomes one vast "city of the nations," and "all kindreds, and tongues, and nations" are virtually combined in one grand imperial system. While the Beast, for the power of this world in its highest development is only after all "a Beast," who dominates in this world-wide kingdom, and who is the genius and inspiration of this astonishing success, will not only be wondered after by all the world but will be hailed and crowned as its long looked-for Messiah, and all its inhabitants shall worship him as such, "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

THE LAMB HORNED BEAST.

But contemporaneous with this last form of Gentile power, upholding and enforcing it, there arises out of the earth another beast, with two horns, like a lamb, and the speech of a dragon. This beast does not supplant, but is the confederate and ally of the other. It exercises the power of the first beast "before him," and causes the earth and its dwellers to worship him. This beast works astonishing miracles, by which its deceitful claims are confirmed, and the power of the first beast everywhere recognized. By its efforts the image of the first beast appears instinct with life and is everywhere worshipped; while submission to its mark is made essential to the transaction of any kind of business. We have here, then, another "beast" something of earthly origin, and another instrument of the dragon.

We have already seen that the prophetic symbols indicate that governments in the last times aspire to something higher than the regulation of the material interests of men. The intellectual forces of society are inwrought into the system. We have now distinctly brought out the fact that the moral and religious forces of the world are to be combined in this last form of world-wide empire and satanic craft. The "horns of a lamb" point unmistakably to a direct simulation of the Messianic work and claims of Jesus. We are led to expect that the same great enemy who has possessed himself of the political systems of mankind, finally usurps control also in its

Digitized by Google

ecclesiastical affairs, compressing its church politics into the channel of his base design. As the "gospel of the Kingdom of God" has already been widely betrayed and travestied within the limits of the visible Church, it is no bold supposition that she will be found at last a ready ally of the Beast. Already is the conviction firmly seated in the minds of multitudes that civilization is another name for Christianity. Ignorant of even such simple facts of Divine testimony as that the first great civilizers were of the line of Cain, and after the flood, of Ham. Ignorant of the purpose of God to give the world, for this dispensation, into the hands of the children of this world, to give them time and scope for all their experiments, they are looking for the Kingdom of God as the last result of the culture of this world and the progress of mankind. Hence, already, under the guidance of those who direct the moral and even the religious culture of men, the masses are being prepared to receive and accord Messianic honors to the Beast. The final form of this false prophesying is presented in the Apocalypse under this figure of a lamb horned beast, who is also called in Rev. 16:13, and 19:20, "the false prophet," and who is finally destroyed with the Beast. The essence of this falsehood, in its bearing upon man as an individual and in the aggregate is, that man is his own Saviour. Alas! that many who heartily deny this as to the individual, unwittingly accept the error as to man in the aggregate. Having no confidence in the flesh in the unit, they still have faith in it in the mass, and hence look not for that kingdom of the resurrection of the dead for which Paul counted all things but loss. (Philipps. 3d.) Hence this false faith in the human race will gradually drive out the doctrine of the necessity of a Divine birth for the individual. We find the moral and religious forces of the world at last, although still wearing the name of Christ, prostituted into the line of Satan's last grand effort to deceive the world and retain its sceptre from the hands of God's anointed, and actually becoming his chief tool in the nefarious scheme.

But why the two horns on this false beast, who claims to be a prophet frnm God? Here again we can but suggest.

It is easy to recognize two opposite and yet allied tendencies among the false forms of religious teaching. The one, running in the direction of great ecclesiastical systems, and counterfeit imitation of the coming kingdom of Christ. These, although embracing within their corporate connection, many true saints of God, are yet as systems of the earth. They have their basis in this present world, and are dependent upon it for support. The Church of Rome is the most eminent example. Another tendency, developed on the field of Protestantism, is the exaltation of human reason into the place of infallible authority and theocratic rule. It would rule, not so much through systems as by the force of great moral and religious ideas. It avails itself of press, platform, and pulpit, and from thence spreads its false gospel of human culture in the name of the Lord. "Liberal Christianity" it is sometimes styled. "Liberal" it is in the eyes of men; in that it betrays or counterfeits every truth that centres in the cross and crown of Jesus. Now, may it not be that in the "two horns" we see these two apparently opposing forms of error still uniting in this vain endeavor to erect the Kingdom of God on the platform of this present evil world, and finally both contributing their support and wielding all their powers to bolster up that crowning effort which shall be so like the promised kingdom that all but the very elect shall be deceived. And is this, alas! the "course of this world," and the end of this present age? We can arrive at no other conclusion from the sure word of prophecy and from the signs of the times; just before Christ will be Antichrist. And all the material resources of the world and its moral and religious forces will be compressed by Satan into the line of this last proud endeavor to draw the whole world into one final rebellion against God and rejection of the claims of His Son Jesus as universal Lord. And that the visible Church will also be largely drawn into the vortex of this endeavor, is also manifest. Although it is still a blessed fact that the true saints of God will have grace

Digitized by Google

given them to escape at least this final degradation, and to "come out of her," that they may keep their own garments undefiled.

As to the miracles to be wrought by the lamb horned prophet, we may not hazard much in the way of conjecture. We know that the old dragon, who enabled James and Jambes to withstand Moses by lying miracles, may repeat, on a wider scale, his deception. God may greatly remove the barriers which now hedge in his power, until amazing prodigies, of which the wonders of Spiritualism may be an earnest, shall be brought in to aid the great delusion. As the world at large is in love with Satan's lie, God may remove the restraints of His Spirit and Providential control, so that they may believe the lie and feed on it to their final condemnation. And God's witnesses on earth, who are found now in all forms of human association, in whose hearts His Spirit dwells, and by whose lips He speaks, to the effectual hindrance of this ripeniug mystery of iniquity, will be aggregated and finally taken out of the way, being counted worthy to escape all these things that are coming on the earth, and to stand before the Son of Man.

And is this, then, the final result of the preaching of the Gospel and of the mission of the Spirit in this dispensation? Yes, God has, by these means, "condemned the world," and gathered the people out from the Gentiles unto His name, prepared for the Lord. These shall appear with Him in glory, to enter with Him upon those judicial administrations that shall throw down the proud imperial structure over which the Beast reigns supreme, and bring to nought all the grandeur of this city of the nations.

The symbolic figures that represent these worldly powers and systems, are given to the burning flame, and over them rolls a lake of fire. The platform of the world is cleared for the setting up of that new order, that celestial commonwealth of which the risen Jesus, so long rejected, is the corner-stone, and into which His risen saints are wrought as lively stones, fashioned after the similitude of a palace, and in its light shall the nations henceforth walk. The power of His resurrection, which they knew when first they believed on Him, will then have made the saints victorious over death. They shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body. And this same resurrection power shall be felt through the whole realm of Satan's power. Physical as well as moral evil shall be first *restrained.* Satan shall be bound and finally destroyed. Thus at the very crisis of his apparent triumph, at the very maturity of his long-concocted and skilfully contrived experiment, the Lord shall come to defeat it all, and to extend the power of His resurrection through all his blighted dominions, until finally not only the earth, but the whole creation shall be bathed in the light of God, and bask in its Father's smile. But, oh! the appalling dangers to which Christians, and especially those who are now appointed to speak for God, are exposed. We have seen where the world and even the professing Church are drifting. Are these views of prophetic truth a trifling matter which, if not branded as error, may be tolerated as a harmless conceit? Alas! if they are of the Gospel of the kingdom, then all opposing views are of the error of the wicked one. There is no fellowship between light and darkness, no concord between Christ and Belial. Those ministers who despise prophetic studies, or who believe that this sure word is capable of any and every sort of interpretation, are entreated to reconsider this dangerous opinion. Their doctrine on this point may be preparing the world and even the Church for Antichrist. Is this a light and unimportant matter? While we may be mistaken and even fanciful as to minor details, we do assert that if our general view as to the course and end of this world, and of the coming of Christ as its only deliverance, be the gospel of the Kingdom of God, then that kind of teaching and preaching which directs the hearts of men to some other hope of His appearing, is of the brood of the wicked one. The charge is a solemn one, but it had as best be well understood first as last, that these two systems of interpretation affect all the truths of the Gospel and all the vital issues therein raised between truth and error, life and death, the kingdom of Satan and the Kingdom

Digitized by Google

of God's dear Son. And that, therefore, while those who expect the Church to reign here without her absent Lord, and before she is prepared to reign by conformity to Him through resurrection, may "tolerate" our doctrine; we cannot tolerate theirs. The Word of God pronounces such views, and the efforts to which they give rise on the part of the Church to gain power in the world "beastly," and therefore will we still hold by and teach the faith once for all delivered to the saints, and which is certainly as old as Abraham, the father of the faithful: "*No city of God on earth, no rest nor inheritance for His saints here before the resurrection of the dead.*"

L. C. B.

"EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS!"

It was centuries ago, on that lonely Isle of Patmos, that the beloved Disciple uttered those sweet words: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." It was in response to the solemn watchword of Jesus Himself, "Surely I come quickly." It was God's Holy Spirit that inspired this affectionate prayer in the heart of the exiled Revelator, and again wafted it in incense before the throne of the Eternal. That Disciple, after beholding wondrous visions of the mighty future, and marking the course of time as events rolled on, closing up the Gentile age with the overthrow of the apostate kingdoms of the world, and the bringing in of a new and better dispensation, his heart was filled with love to the Saviour, and he longed for the triumph and reign of his blessed Lord: for he well knew that with the coming of that event wickedness should cease in the earth, and the glory of the Lord should cover it as the waters cover the deep.

Although eighteen centuries have nearly passed away since these words were first uttered; though many sorrows, trials, and disappointments have befallen God's holy watchers, during those long years, in their struggles to hold fast the "blessed hope;" though Jesus has not yet come in His glory; and though many are growing weary, and are saying, "My Lord delayeth His coming;" His coming is nevertheless certain, and we still say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

Yes, the Saviour will come, for He has promised it, and He never deceives. When He comes he will raise the sleeping saints, restore the earth to its Eden state, and reign with His people. Then will be commingled together in heavenly union, the voices of angelic hosts with those of the redeemed, praising God for His righteous judgments, and for bringing redemption to the world. But, oh! what a fearful doom will be that of the wicked, who will then "call upon the rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!"

Dear reader, do you love Jesus? and if so, do you "love His appearing?" Are you praying to be accounted worthy to escape that hour of trial which is about to come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth? Do you expect to be a guest at the Marriage Supper, or will you be shut out with the unwatchful "foolish Virgins?" These are questions of intense moment for all; for "the day of the Lord is near, it hasteth greatly." "Blessed is he that watcheth." "The watchman said, 'The morning cometh, and also the night.'" Strange that morning and night should come together; but so it is—*morning* as bringing deliverance to the righteous, but *night* as bringing destruction upon the wicked. Solemn thought! Are we ready for these things?

S. R.

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

"What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both your state and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest
Unless you think rightly of Him:
As Jesus appears to your view—
As He is beloved or not,
So God is disposed toward you,
And mercy or wrath is your lot."

Digitized by Google

Selections.

THE CLOSING HOURS OF TIME.

Are we really in the winding-up of our world's history? If so, what a solemn thought! All to be over so soon. Our work all to be closed up. A day of settlement to dawn. Yes, the scrutinizing eye of the Judge will then be turned with a searching glance upon us. Our past history of faithfulness, or unfaithfulness, will then reappear, to approve or condemn us. Our hearts, filled with heavenly zeal, or chilling luke-warmness, will then decide our claims to the felicities of a celestial paradise; for we shall then continue "holy still" or "filthy still."

Are we indeed nearing a day of such magnitude? Are we truly living in the closing hours of time? We cannot evade the conclusion that such is the case. Then what is our duty? If the Master is about to return, how should we improve these closing hours? If we have been remiss in duty in days gone by, should we not begin now to do the will of Christ? If we have lived prayerless lives, let us begin to visit the throne of grace, and seek pardon for past indifference, and strength for time to come. Let us go to work for God, and pluck men as brands from the burning. The hours fly—will we improve them? The closing hours of time are upon us; shall we squander them in idleness? Oh! sound out the cry, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh!" and do it with devoted hearts and earnest minds.

FOOLHARDINESS.

"A Swiss traveller," says a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, "describes a village, situated on the slope of a great mountain, of which the strata shelve in the direction of the place. Huge crags, directly overhanging the village, and massive enough to sweep the whole of it into the torrent below, have become separated from the main body of the mountain, in the course of ages, by great fissures, and now scarce adhere to it. When they give way, the village must perish; it is only a question of time, and the catastrophe may happen any day. For years past, engineers have been sent to measure the width of the fissures, and report them constantly increasing. The villagers, for more than one generation, have been aware of their danger; subscriptions have been once or twice opened to enable them to remove; yet they live on in their doomed dwellings, from year to year, fortified against the ultimate certainty and daily probability of destruction, by the common sentiment: 'Things may last their time and longer.'"

This is a fair practical illustration of the recklessness to which we accustom ourselves even in the affairs of this life; but more especially in regard to our spiritual interests. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." We work hourly in the midst of dangers. The thread of life is brittle, and may be snapped in a moment. There is but a step between us and the awful realities of eternity. Men know, too, that the hand of retribution will visit them for their sins, and that if they do not abandon their wickedness, the day of vengeance will surely come. Now and then some startling providence reminds them afresh of their peril; they hear the premonitory groan and rumble of the approaching avalanche; yet as soon as it is found that the destruction is stayed, they settle down in renewed indifference, and sin on yet longer. Men give themselves to vices which they know must, sooner or later, bring a terrible harvest of shame, agony, and ruin. They see others in whom the awful results of a life of sin are exemplified, and for a moment they are alarmed; yet because *their* hour of retribution lingers, they yield anew to the infatuations of sin, and put from them the warnings of mercy and of truth. Even Lot and his family had to be dragged out of Sodom at the last moment. What need have we to watch and pray—to guard against the almost brutal

Digitized by Google

indifference with which men wander on the brink of ruin, and sport in the presence of danger and of death! Dwelling in the midst of these perils renders us reckless as to danger. The charms of sense bewitch us. The excitements of the hour absorb us. The ambitions of life carry us away, and we forget that we are mortal, until the crash of ruin comes suddenly, and the overhanging doom descends when we look not for it. Sinner! look up and see the ruin that is ready to fall, and flee for thy life to the refuge of God's mercy. Careless Christian! the day of reckoning will come as a thief on them that are at ease in Zion—on all the carnal, and voluptuous, and proud, on all who, like Demas, "love this present world." Awake, thou that sleepest, and trim thy lamp, and put oil in thy vessel; for the Bridegroom will come, and the door will be closed against all the careless, and sudden destruction will come upon them.—*Christian Standard.*

Editorial.

THE DICHOTOMY.

THE Son of God, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and King, among His Divine words which are spirit and life, has uttered one saying, which is especially seasonable for the instruction of ministers of the Gospel at this time, and to which we have felt urged to draw particular attention. We refer to that *dichotomy*, or "cutting asunder," spoken of in the 24th of Matthew, and in the 12th of Luke. The two passages are similar; yet there are some differences between them. We do not propose, in this article, to dwell upon those differences; but to point out the tremendous severance the Lord will make between certain of His servants at His coming, and the ground upon which this severance will be made.

Our readers will recollect that at the commencement of this serial, there were given certain outlines of doctrine, in which it was believed the clergymen of various denominations, whose names were printed as sanctioning and taking part in the enterprise, were substantially agreed. The 12th point was this:

"That very important interests are connected with the right understanding and diligent inculcation of these truths; as indicated in Dan. 12:9–12; Matt. 24:42–51; Luke 21:34–36; 2 Thess. 5:1–9; 2 Tim. 4:8; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 16:15; where it is taught that only those who are properly awake to these particular matters, and watchful, and waiting, and looking for the Lord's speedy return, and prepare accordingly, shall escape the dreadful tribulations which are to mark the last years of this dispensation, or secure the high and peculiar honors in reservation for the wise and faithful."

Now what we are about to say, concerning the great loss of privilege and blessing which some will experience at the *parousia* (*presence* or coming) of Jesus, will place one aspect of this very important matter in a clearer light. And we feel persuaded that if earnest Christians, and especially those who minister in holy things, and preach the word, comprehended the subject,—as a little honest and disinterested inquiry would early enable them to do, and for which abundant opportunity has often been placed within their reach, of late years,—it would have a very marked influence on the way in which they treat the great topic of the advent of our Lord; and would, undoubtedly, in the case of some, lead to great searchings of heart.

Let it be noted, in the first place, that it is nothing strange to find distinctions made by God in dealing with His servants. The whole Christian Church is essentially an eclectic body; the gathering out of which, by the preaching of the Gospel, is the object, or one

Digitized by Google

chief object, of the present dispensation: as the very name "elect," *ecclesia*, or Church,—("called out, chosen out") shows. And with this agrees the manner in which the New Testament everywhere speaks of it: see *e. g.*, 1 Peter 2 : 9.

And not only is this the case, but there are also differences in the standing of the members themselves, and in God's dealings with them, here and hereafter; although they all belong to one body, and are called in one hope of their calling, and are united in the common redemption. In the matter of rewards, our Lord will deal with each of us strictly according to our works. This is abundantly manifest from 2 Cor. 5 : 10; 2 Tim. 2 : 20, 21; Rev. 22: 12; Ros. 2 : 6; Ros. 14 : 12; 1 Tim. 3 : 13; 2 John, 8, &c; and is alluded to in many other passages as a well-known fact. So that we may say that as regards mere salvation, there is no difference between the chief of the Apostles, and one converted just before death; since it is all of grace; but as regards future station, the difference, though still all of free grace, yet (according to the procedure laid down in the passages just quoted) being arranged, so to speak, according to fitness, or merit, or, at least, having regard to works—the difference, we say, will be immense. This distinction, indeed, is inherent in the case, and founded in the justice and love of God. "In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor."

We see, too, that the divine wisdom deals variously with the saints even now, in the present life. See 1 Cor. 12, *passim*, where it is also expressly said that those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary.

We have elsewhere pointed out from Scripture, and by clear inferences from Scripture, that the Lord Jesus gathers to Himself, in the air, all His saints, before He visibly appears to the world in power and glory; and also, that His people are removed in successive companies, or by successive translations, in proportion as they are in a fitting condition to be thus dealt with.

Now the first, and, in some respects, the most striking of these differences will appear at the very opening of the day of the Lord. For some will be then at once gathered to Him,—"taken" apart, as a mark of special favor; while others will be left behind. The word used respecting this class in Matt. 24 : 40, 41, and Luke 17 : 34, 35, is the same that is employed in relating the special favor mentioned in Matt. 17 : 1, and Matt. 26 : 37.* Those of the first translation will be thus taken, while others will be left behind, not only cut off from the special exemption and privileges conferred, but dealt with judicially, and punished severely.

This special punitive infliction, at the opening of the day of the Lord, we find described in Matt. 24 : 51, and Luke 12 : 46. In both these cases the unfaithful servants are cut off from the special blessing, in a similar manner, and we find precisely the same words used by the Holy Ghost; yet there seems to be a difference in their subsequent experience. For of those in Luke, it is said, simply, that they have their portion appointed with the unbelievers; while those in Matthew will have their part with the hypocrites, and will experience wailing and gnashing of teeth.

To some superficial thinkers, the difference may appear small, or even fanciful; but we have not so learned to regard the Divine sayings recorded in the Sacred Scripture, every word of which is pure as silver, tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times; and all of which is profitable, in order that the man of God may be "complete," and "completely equipped" (*ἄρτιος και ἐξηρτίσμενος*); and of which the Son of God says, that not one jot or tittle shall pass or fail; and concerning which He has also pointed out in a most striking and emphatic manner, that those are blessed who hear the word of God, and who keep it. And He has declared this, and repeated it, in an es-

* The Greek word is *παραλαμβανω*. Very different is the expression used concerning the "man-child," in Rev. 12 : 5. Our English version says, the man-child was "caught up," but in the Greek it is "snatched" with violence, or haste, and the word is *ἁρπαζω*.

Digitized by Google

pecially impressive manner, respecting that portion which is written in the book of the Revelation. Christian man or woman! beware! Beware how you join in the stupid cry against this sacred book and precious treasure, given to us in infinite benevolence. Leave that for the wicked to do!

The precise words which the Holy Ghost uses are *διχοτομησει αὐτον*. In our version they are rendered: "he" (the lord of that servant) "shall cut him asunder."* To most of ordinary readers this conveys the idea of bodily bisection; and many have, no doubt, been startled by it, and wondered what it could mean. That bodily bisection is not intended is, however, sufficiently evident from the context. The marginal reading in reference Bibles gives the words correctly, viz., "shall cut him off;" that is from the blessings and privileges just mentioned as conferred on the watchful and faithful servant. We sometimes say of an expectant relative, "the will cut him off." And this is the signification here.

Now what is the blessing from which the unfaithful servant is cut off? It is the being made ruler over all that his lord hath; and in Matthew it is spoken of in intimate connection with the "taking" of one, and "leaving" of another.

From this we see that those Christians who have not been looking out for, and earnestly expecting our Saviour's coming, will suffer a great loss—a deprivation, from which they might have been exempted as readily as others, had their conduct been different. In the passages of Matthew and Luke, no special explanation is given of the nature of their loss; but a comparison with what the Lord Jesus has told us in the account of His Revelation, in the day of the Lord,† shows plainly that they will have to endure the first part, at least, of the terrors and sufferings of the Great Tribulation; though the way will still be open to them, if found among the Wise Virgins, to escape the yet more awful sufferings during Antichrist's reign of three and a half years. It is clear that the translated company of those who, in Rev. 7, are found to have repaired their error, by washing their soiled garments in the blood of the Lamb, will have passed through the fearful judgments of the first six seals. The judgment of the first seal is indicated by the great revival of religion, consequent on the righteous act which cuts them off from their ready companions, and leaves them behind. And under the other seals they endure, in common with an unbelieving world, God's four sore judgments—the sword, famine, pestilence, and the beasts of the earth—in addition to the fierce persecution, under the fifth seal, and the inexpressible terrors of the shaken powers of universal nature in earth and sky, so fearfully depicted under the sixth seal. For a clearer comprehension of what these are, we refer our readers to Seiss's description of them, in his "Lectures on the Apocalypse." (See Lectures 11, 12, 13, and 14.)

Now if these judgments, shared by believers in common with the ungodly, at least as far as they affect the temporal condition of men then living on the earth, do not sufficiently account for the wailing and gnashing of teeth mentioned by Matthew as the portion of the hypocrites which the servant unfaithful in teaching is to share, then words are vain. Even if we suppose the gnashing of teeth to be done by the ungodly alone, the wailing remains for all. Wailing, we say, on the part of these servants: not only on account of the forfeited privilege, but also on account of the tremendous sufferings; and not only on account of the sufferings, but also on account of the blessing of the firstborn, now forever fled away. In vain will

* In looking over the versions within our reach, we found, to our surprise, a good rendering of this passage in the French, viz.: "Il le seperera, et le mettra au rung des infideles." The Spanish is striking too: "Y le apartara y pondra su parte con los desleules."

† The *opening* throne scene in Rev. 4 and 5 shows, in the *crowned* elders and living ones, a translation already accomplished. There is nothing at all *strange* or *unscriptural* in the idea that some saints are left behind, when others are taken. There is another translation in Rev. 7, one in Rev. 12, two in Rev. 14, one in Rev. 15; besides, Jesus positively says that some shall be "*left*." *That settles it.*

Digitized by Google

these servants then cry, like Esau, with a great and exceeding bitter cry: "Bless me, even me also, O my Father!" The answer will be: "I have blessed *him;* yea, and he shall be blessed." *The birthright of the firstborn will be forfeited forever.* It is true there will still be another blessing, in answer to the fervent supplication: "Hast Thou but *one* blessing, O my Father? Bless *me,* even me *also,* O my Father!" But the blessing of the birthright, the blessing of the firstborn, will have fled away. They had *sold* it—sold it for a mess of pottage.

And if we now inquire further what is the essence of the unfaithfulness which leads to such a sad result, the answer is easy. It is expressly stated by the Holy Ghost that it has a twofold aspect. First, and chiefly, the conduct of the unfaithful servant in the matter, so strictly enjoined on all the household, of looking out for his lord's coming. He kept saying, in spite of light and warning—in spite of the example and remonstrance of faithful fellow-servants—"My lord lingers: I expect him, of course; but he is not coming at present: there is not the least probability of it. In fact the circumstances are such that such an expectation at *this* time is altogether visionary, and apt to lead to strange language and practices in the household. It makes a man unpopular and uncomfortable in the surrounding community, and imperils his usefulness." In the second place, he treats his fellow-servants badly; being thrown off his guard, as a natural result of relaxed vigilance and preparation. He is, insensibly perhaps, infected by the contagious worldly spirit of the times. His heart grows colder. His spiritual affections languish;—as he has put from him that of which the Holy Ghost testifies that every one that hath *this* hope purifies himself, as Jesus is pure (1 John 3:3); and perhaps he even goes so far as to take part in forbidden things, and to eat and drink with the drunken.

Dichotomy is a severe surgical process; sometimes it entirely amputates a limb; and sometimes it incises a part, in order to remove a foreign substance. But it is also essentially healing. It is meant for cure; to save what remains; or to promote a new and healthy growth and union.

Not less wise and kind is the Great Physician. In the midst of wrath He evermore (if possible) remembers mercy: yet with unfaltering nerve and vigorous stroke He wields the keen unerring blade. Every branch that beareth fruit He *purgeth,* that it may bring forth more fruit. And every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire. The fan of the Divine Saviour-King is in His hand; and He will thoroughly purge His floor. And judgment, evermore, *begins* at the house of God.

Once more, look at the Divine *dictum.* The servant in Luke beats the men-servants and maid-servants, eats and drinks, and *is* drunken; and has his portion with the unbelievers. The servant in Matthew eats and drinks *with* the drunkards, and strikes the *fellow-servants:* he receives *his* portion with the *hypocrites;* and there is *weeping,* and gnashing of teeth. In Matthew we read: "whom his lord hath made ruler;" in Luke, "whom he shall make ruler." The servant in Luke is appointed to give "the portion of food" (*το σιτομετρον*); but the servant in Matthew, "that meat that is in season" (*την τροφην εν καιρω*).

However, this being reckoned with the unbelievers and with the hypocrites, is only, as we believe, in certain points, and temporarily—as regards judgments; more than that, the harmony of other Scriptures seems to forbid. We have not the least idea that any one who is a genuine servant, and loyal at heart, though derelict, will be finally lost: the whole tenor of the Scripture is against *that.* But, surely, the deprivement, penalty, and irreparable forfeiture, are severe enough already. The door of the wedding is shut; as bridegroom the Lord knows not the foolish virgin. To some, perhaps, even that translation door which John saw open in heaven may be shut until the final "harvest of the earth" is reaped.

People may not like this *dichotomy*—this fearful severing from others, and sundering from their privileges. But it cannot be got rid of. Whether we understand the reasons for such a procedure—whether we approve of it—

Digitized by Google

or not, thus it will be. The mouth of Eternal Truth has spoken it. And the multitude in Rev. 7 come out from the tribulation, the great One, which they have had to endure; for the inspired words are: οἱ ἐρχομενοι ἐκ της θλιψεως της μεγαλης. Our Lord's words, in Matthew 24: 29, show that the tribulation is in the day of the Lord; in which time, also, is the "taking," and the "cutting off." No ingenuity can make the passage apply to the ordinary afflictions of believers in our present state.*

This judgment of God, like all His acts, will be right. Just look at the case. The absent Jesus said: "Be always on the lookout for me. I tell you emphatically, whatever you do, do not omit always to watch for your Lord." The servants all know this; and they know that He will return. But some of them say: "There is not the least likelihood of His coming now:—it is certain He cannot come for a thousand years at least." Wilfully, or at first inadvertently, they lower the standard of duty, and depart from the letter of His instructions. Some even go so far as to explain them away, insisting that they have only a hidden—some call it "figurative" or "spiritual"—meaning. Eventually some have constant fellowship with demoralized, or even with riotous, neighbors. And insensibly they take rank with infidels;—those who do not believe, and who are not trustworthy;—for the word includes both senses. They fellowship with the disloyal. It is much if they do not become scoffers at a portion, at least, of their instructions. Some are carried to such a length by these deceptive influences that they become downright hypocrites, merely keeping up good appearances of duty. And all this is the natural consequence of letting go an expectant attitude. Can they then, thus caught, by the unexpected return of their Lord, in *flagrante delicto*, complain if they are put, as a remedial measure, temporarily at least, into the position of the infidel and disloyal; until the sharp lesson of adversity has given them a just view of their neglect of duty? The Omniscient Master can tell at a glance whether the neglectful servant was at heart loyal, being only overborne through heedlessness and evil communications, or whether he never was aught else than a traitor in disguise.

If millenarian views are correct, this Divine dichotomy may, at any time, be realized, in the actual experience of the members of the Church; and, especially, of those ministering in holy things. We humbly ask: Are not the great majority of them unwilling to admit the possibility of the speedy advent of the Lord Jesus? And, rejecting at a blow the overwhelming millenarian testimony of the Holy Scriptures, do they not more or less openly ridicule the probability of it? But now suppose for one moment that the views advocated by this serial are correct—suppose the Lord should come this year, or this month—what then? Let them solemnly lay their hands on their hearts, and see whether the answer can be aught else than—a *dichotomy*;—διχα, apart; and τεμνο, I cut; separated, severed, sundered.

Oh will not some begin to examine, or to re-examine the evidence? One thing cannot be gainsaid;—whoever is a believer, and is not longing for Jesus, is not on Scriptural ground. Scriptural ground is: to be watching for our Lord—to be waiting for the Son of God from heaven.

* It has been said to us: Why should other Christians be left behind? Why should some, apparently no better, perhaps very much inferior, in gifts, standing, and graces, have such a special privilege above us? The answer is, God has said: "To them that *look for* Him will He appear." He will give the crown of righteousness to "them that love His appearing." We can only say: the way is open to all. Christ makes his own terms. And it is safe to believe that He has sufficient reasons, and that He will honor the obedient. Yet it would seem that, somehow or other, faithfulness in this one point, when growing out of true heart's devotion, carries everything else in its train. Such is the tone of the Sacred Scriptures throughout. They speak as if this expectant attitude were the vital disposition—the true spiritual barometer. But should any one still ask: Why does Christ make such distinctions? we answer, with our beloved brother Paul, "Nay, but O man." Or even with Gambold, "Jesus hath loved me—*I* cannot tell why." For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things. To whom be glory forever. Amen.

Digitized by Google

We dare not expect that an article like this will have any other treatment from those opposed to millenarian views than, in most instances, at best, to be passed by with silent contempt. Yet *some* may pause and think. If Jesus *should* call his waiting ones shortly, what a fearful *denouement* it would be. In any case millenarians are on safe ground; the worst that could happen would be that they should be disappointed in their over-sanguine hopes, for the present.

Can there still be such as are willing to wait for the woes of the Great Tribulation to wean them from the world and its religious fashions? Oh that great sundering! Oh the dreadful excision!

Are there not some who think it no harm to be conformed to the world, so long as they abstain from gross vices? Oh that such would hearken to the word of exhortation! For "ye suffer fools gladly, seeing you yourselves are wise." Be entreated not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers, lest you should be left to share their judgment. For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? *Come out from among them*, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; *and I will receive you*, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Is it right or sensible that in the Church the name of Christ is continually mentioned, and yet His claims as King ignored? For the word "Christ" is nothing else than Anglicized Greek for "Anointed King," as is "Jesus" Anglicized Hebrew for "Saviour." When the name Jesus is mentioned, it brings before our minds the Divine agony, and the cross; and when the name Christ is mentioned, it presents the Divine coming kingdom. His whole name —that sacred name which is above every name, at which every knee shall bow,—is JESUS CHRIST. Not Christ alone, but Jesus. Not Jesus only, but *Christ*. Soldiers of the cross, recognize your colors. *Quousque tandem?*

If the Lord Jesus should actually come, within a few months or days—and *some* time or other the separation we have been pointing out *will* be made, because the Lord Jesus Himself has positively said it—this predicted dichotomy would overwhelm the mass of church members with dismay. Slowly and reluctantly they would awake to the facts of the case, and learn, from this practical decision of the Lord Jesus and exemplification of *His* opinion of the case, what a fearful responsibility is connected with the right use of the prophetic word, and what important blessings are forfeited by the neglect of it, in the vain effort to be on good terms with, to please, or to gain over, the world.

And when they shall have comprehended their fearful loss and the cause of it, they will be overwhelmed with amazement likewise at finding that everything was outlined in advance, in the unerring chart of the Word of God—only—they had no eyes to see it. Or, rather, they *would* not use them.

That it is possible to read the Scripture, and to overlook some of its teachings, is demonstrated by the example of the Apostles. For, as the Christian Church now sees, all the main points of our Lord's first advent and sufferings are clearly stated in the Holy Scriptures. But yet it is said of the Apostles: "As yet they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead." Our Lord said to two of His disciples: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken!" And then "*He opened* to them the Scriptures; and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." And, a little while afterwards, lo, the very same thing again! For Jesus appeared to the eleven, and to the other disciples, and said unto them: "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that *all* things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me." Then *opened He* their under-

Digitized by Google

standing, that they might understand the Scriptures.

And just so it is *now*, concerning the *second* advent. The Scripture has a complete record for those who in simple faith receive it, search it, and can harmonize it. And just because they have not this faith, and will not do these things, the fearful dichotomy will overtake many. They will be "left." Simply left where they are. But yet, "Alas! who shall live when God doeth this!"

We would say, with all the energy of which we are capable, the things that are about to transpire in the day of the Lord will not be new and unheard of; they are all recorded in advance, and systematically detailed; especially in the book of the Revelation. It is only to the apprehension of many that they will be new, and new in their dreadful experience; *who will then first be willing to learn that God means just what He says in plain language.* And those Christians who will not believe it, nor act on it, will justly experience, while living, the terrible dichotomy of the opening scenes of the judgment, fallen in their lifetime; nor would it help them if they died before then; because the consequences would follow them after death, in being *left out* of Paul's *exanastasis* (Phil. 3 : 11 and 14), and in suffering that loss spoken of in 1 Cor. 3 : 15 and Matt. 5 : 19.

In so tremendous a disappointment—in so painful an experience—say, would not this reflection be the bitterest ingredient: that God, who has mentioned His intentions beforehand, warned me of it, and that some of my brethren, most affectionately and with earnest longing, pointed out, repeatedly and urgently, this and other great revealed truths connected with the coming judgments and kingdom of Jesus; but I self-complacently put it from me, with a quiet smile, following the prejudices and notions of the day, and refusing to give an honest examination; and that, as if it had been a matter unworthy of consideration by sensible men, I rejected it, and perhaps even impatiently, with contempt or ill-will, as visionary.

In conclusion, we say to all who have read this article: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run *all;* but *one* obtaineth the PRIZE? So run that *ye* may obtain."

E. E. R.

NOTES AND NOTICES.

WE are very thankful to our friends for the attention given to our recent appeals in behalf of *The Prophetic Times*, and for the many words of sympathy and cheer which have reached us. There are still many in arrears, some for two and three years, from whom we would like to hear immediately. If such do not value our issues, the best for themselves and for us, would be to settle up and discontinue. It certainly cannot be regarded as fair, to keep us under expense of printing and sending our serial, when there is no effort or intention to pay for it. Settle up, therefore,—settle up without further delay. Our necessities demand it, and your conscience cannot be clear without it. The sum is so small as to be nothing to you; but it is what we are obliged to depend on to meet the expenses of publication.

A FRIEND has written us concerning "Michael the Archangel," asking if he be not Christ himself. We have said that Angels are certainly of various orders. An *Arch*angel, is simply an Angel of the superior class—one higher in rank and dignity than others. There are therefore *Archangels.* And even among Archangels, there may be one of pre-eminent dignity, so as to be specially called "the Archangel," as in 1 Thess. 4 : 16, and Jude 9, without being more than a created being. The theory that "Michael the Archangel" is an angelic title of Christ, looks plausible, and may possibly be true, but we are not persuaded of its truth, and with our present light, cannot receive it. Five times do the Scriptures speak of Michael, three times in Daniel, once in Jude, and once in Revelation; but there is nothing in either case to prove that Christ is meant. The meaning of the word, *God-like, who-is-as-God,* proves nothing. *Man* was also created "*in the image of God.*" Gabriel is a created angel, and yet Gabriel means *the mighty one of God.* That Michael is the prince of the Jewish people, proves nothing; because Grecia and

Digitized by Google

Persia have like princes. These are angelic beings, and Michael is only one of an order of such princes—"ONE *of the chief princes*" (Dan. 10:13, 14). Michael is represented as supporting and *holding with* an angel (Dan. 10:21); Christ is nowhere spoken of as helping angels, or holding with them, but everywhere as ministered unto and helped by them. That Michael has "his angels," argues nothing, for the devil also has "his angels;" and if there can be angelic princehood on the side of evil, there can also be on the side of good. When Christ was assaulted by the devil, He rebuked him with Divine authority, and said: "*Get thee hence, Satan;*" but when "Michael the Archangel" was in dispute with Satan "about the body of Moses," *he did not dare* to give sentence of condemnation against him, but referred to *the Lord* as the only one to whom such prerogatives pertain. We can readily conceive how one high angel could be held and withstood by another, and how he should be under restraint from giving judgment; but when it comes to the eternal Son of God, in his heavenly majesty before his incarnation, we are at a loss to understand such a detention on the one side, or such a constraint on the other. The allusion to "the Archangel" in 1 Thess. 4, whose "voice" is heard when Christ comes to judgment, would seem to indicate an *attendant* of "the Lord himself," and hence a created being, and not Christ.

Besides, if "Michael the Archangel" is the eternal Son of God, it is strange that worship is never rendered to him. When the Father "bringeth in the First-begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship Him;" but nothing of the sort is ever said of "Michael the Archangel." Angels speak of him, but only as one of themselves. They acknowledge his high princely character, and mention his help and concurrence with them, but pay him no Divine honors. The elders, saints, and living ones in glory fall down before the Lamb, and adoringly pronounce Him worthy to receive the power, and the riches, and the glory, and the honor, and the blessing; but though "Michael and his angels fight" for the expulsion of Satan from the heaven, and cast him out, we find no falling down before *him*, to ascribe joyous adoration to *him*, as the source and author of the power or the victory. Neither do we ever find any ascriptions to him, from angels or saints, on earth or in heaven, as if he held his place or did his work in *his own* right, virtue, and will, as we find in the case of our adorable Lord. And if any one in our Christian assemblies were to offer prayers to "Michael the Archangel," there is not an intelligent worshipper who would not be shocked by it, as if an idolatrous act had been substituted for the true worship of God. From these considerations then, we hold the theory referred to as too poorly sustained to be regarded as other than erroneous.

ANOTHER friend writes us, that he would like to read our view of Psalm 24, beginning with the seventh verse. He wishes to know whether the scene described there is yet future, or whether it was fulfilled at our Saviour's ascension.

This Psalm is supposed to have been written by David, on the occasion of the bringing up of the ark to Jerusalem, which was typical and prophetic of the going up of the Divine David into the heavenly Jerusalem, and, after him, of the carrying of the Ark of his Church into the same glorious "hill of the Lord." As David beheld the symbol of the Divine presence passing through the gates of the city to the sanctuary prepared for it, and saw that same ark which had led Israel through so many wonders and triumphs, coming at last to the place of its rest on "the hill which God had chosen to dwell in," he was transported in spirit to the glorious consummation, to wit, the final victory of Christ—the Lord of Hosts—over all the powers of Satan, sin, and death, and the exaltation of the Ark of His Church to its eternal rest. And if this was not David's experience, the Holy Ghost which spake by him, doubtless thus embraced in the words this self-same glorious consummation.

Prominent in the process of that consummation, the first great victorious event on which it rests, and really the beginning of it, was the resurrection and ascension of Christ. Hence the ancient expositors, such as Athana-

Digitized by Google

sius, Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom, Leo, and Theodoret, found in this Psalm a prediction of the triumphal ascension of Christ, the last of whom well says, "We here see Christ ascending into heaven, and we hear the choirs of angels singing, 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates' —those gates which were never lifted up before to receive *man* within them, but are now open to all, through Christ, very man as well as very God, who passed through them at the ascension." Hence this is noted as one of the ascension Psalms. We believe that there is full warrant for receiving it in this application. But, whither the Saviour in his triumph enters, His Ark, His Church, is to follow. His ascension is part of the victory, but only a part. It is to be carried still further, and to include a corresponding victory for all His saints. Hence, whilst this Psalm was a prophetic celebration of Christ's ascension, its meaning is not exhausted by that occurrence. It still looks onward from and through that event to the complete settlement of the Ark on "the hill of the Lord," in the New Jerusalem. There was fulfilment when Jesus ascended up "where He was before;" but complete fulfilment awaits the great consummation, and the entry of the people and priests of the Lord into the blessed City, when once the whole redemptive process is finished, the last enemy destroyed, and it shall be said, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men."

CASTING DOWN OF SATAN.

For six thousand years, this once beautiful earth has groaned under the curse, and borne the displeasure of a just and holy God. But shall it continue so forever? We think not. We believe it will again be made beautiful, and again reflect the glory of God, as it did in its Edenic state.

Christ suffered on the cross, not only to redeem the race, but also the earth itself, and to cast out its Prince. (John 12:31.) That time is called in Scripture "the restitution of all things." (Acts 3:21.)

Before Satan is bound, both he and his angels will first be cast down from the aerial heavens. Then will follow that fearful woe upon the world, foretold in the 12th chapter of Revelation.

But Satan now accuses the righteous before God. (Rev. 12:10.) Of what does he accuse them? A friend suggests that Satan's accusation consists in a truth. He thinks it is something like this: Christ is the rightful heir of the world, but Satan tells Him that the people do not want Him to reign. His citizens hated Him, and sent a message after Him, saying, "We *will not* have this man to reign over us." (Luke 19:14.) So our friend thinks that until a certain elect number really desire and pray for the Lord to come and reign, His Kingdom will be delayed, and just so long will Satan keep up his accusation.

Christ cannot inherit His kingdom while Satan usurps it, and it is to be believed that if no one asked him to come and take the kingdom, He would "smite the earth with a curse," as spoken of in the last chapter of Malachi. He sits now upon His Father's throne, but when this world's Prince is cast out, He will sit upon His own throne, and that throne will be the throne of the earth.

But how is Satan to be cast down? We believe it will be, in part at least, by the conquering power of Christ, through the testimony of his followers. Hear what the Scripture says, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death. And the great Dragon was cast out, that old Serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." Then follows the proclamation, "Now is come deliverance and strength, and *the kingdom of our God*, and the authority of His Anointed One; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down." (Rev. 12:10, 11.)

Those who are now ashamed to testify to the truth of God's promises need not wonder if they find themselves excluded from sharing in many of the honors and privileges connected with the coming of Christ and His kingdom. The Lord honors them most who give most honor to Him; and we know not how to confer a greater honor upon Him than to ask Him to fulfil His promises, to cast out Satan, and to take the kingdom and reign.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VIII. JUNE AND JULY, 1870. Nos. 6 & 7.

Special Contributions.

THE SERAPHIM.

ISAIAH 6 : 2.

IT is generally allowed that the Seraphim are identical with the Cherubim. If the Cherubim are not angels, whether real or symbolical, neither are the Seraphim; but if the Cherubim symbolize the Church, so must the Seraphim. I begin with a few quotations to prove that such is the case:

"In this vision God is represented as seated on His throne above the ark (the scenery being taken from the temple), the prophet standing by the altar (of burnt offering), and the veils removed that concealed the Holy of Holies."

"There can be no doubt that the living creatures mentioned in Ezek. 1 : 5, were the Seraphim which Isaiah saw."

"The introduction to this scene (Ezek. 1) may remind us of the first cherubic exhibition recorded in the Bible—a terrific revolving flame, in which the Deity resided."

"It is not, we suppose, to be inferred that the Cherubim were armed with flaming swords which they brandished on every side in an intimidating manner, but that there were flames of fire of the shape of swords, streaming or darting out from the midst of the Cherubim; similar fiery appearances are mentioned in connection with the Cherubim in Ezek. 1 : 13." Again, in Ezek. 1: "Here, as in the temple, the employment of these composite forms looked back to their original destination in the garden of Eden, to keep the way *to* the tree of life, from which man had been debarred on account of sin; ideal creatures, not of angelic but of human mould, God appearing in immediate connection with the Cherubim is just God manifesting himself as the author of holy and elevated life, such as man is yet destined to possess, when the properties of an ideal perfection shall adorn His redeemed and glorified nature, and conformed both in body and soul to the image of the Son of God, he shall be admitted in a renovated and glorious world, to dwell anew around the tree of life. Precisely similar in meaning, though somewhat differing in form, was the representation in Isaiah's vision (ch. 6) where, instead of the usual name Cherubim, that of Seraphim is applied to the symbolical attendants of God—the burning ones, as the word properly signifies—it was by the application of a burning coal to his lips that the prophet, as the representative of the elect portion of the people was hallowed for God's service."

More might be quoted to show that the identity of the Seraphim with the Cherubim is admitted. It is evident that in this vision the Seraphim occupy the same position with the Cherubim in the tabernacle and temple. But why the change of name? Why are the Cherubim here called Seraphim? To understand this it is only necessary to consider the general scope of the vision in which they so appear. "The word Seraph means to scorch, to burn up." "It is not anywhere in the Bible applied to celestial beings."

"As in this vision, Isaiah sets forth his special calling to denounce the obduracy of the

Digitized by Google

people and to set before them the judgments that must follow, we understand how it is that he sees the appearance of Jehovah in the temple, in the midst of the *burning ones*, whilst he feels the doorsills of the temple tremble at their call, and beholds the house filled with smoke. The meaning is, that in spirit he anticipates the future burning of the temple, as the infliction of Jehovah's judgment. Here, then, we have a reason for the change of name to "burning ones," and as "this prophecy extends also in its full latitude to the age of Messiah, and the blindness of the Jews to the gospel, the destruction of their country by the Romans, and their being rejected by God," we see more clearly why the idea—to burn up, to scorch—should be expressed.

"The Lord upon the throne was Christ, and the vision related to his future kingdom, when the veil of separation was to be removed and the whole earth was to be filled with the glory of God revealed to all mankind." This explains the hymn of the Seraphim, for we know that in connection with the present rejection of the Jewish nation, the gospel is preached to the Gentiles; the Church proclaims God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, to all nations. This idea harmonizes with all parts of Isaiah's vision.

That the Cherubim are not always represented under precisely the same aspect does not militate against the fact of their always symbolizing the Church. The Church has been in varying conditions; it is now militant and will be triumphant; to suit these varied conditions of its existence its symbol varies likewise in a few minute particulars.

"Isaiah represents the Seraphim, each as endowed with six wings, an arrangement which evidently has a symbolical significance." "Six signifies judgment, preparation."

Seasons of judgment have sometimes been seasons of preparation, a passing away of the old for the introduction of the new—judgment on some, salvation for others. For the use of the number "six" see Ezek. 8:1, 9:2; Rev. 4:8, 6:12; Gen. 7:11. These instances, combined with the "*six wings*" of the Seraphim, seen in a vision which sets forth the judicial blindness of the Jewish nation and the wrath that was to follow, prove that "six" may be considered the Scripture synonyme of judgment. In accordance with this see Acts 13:44–52; 28:23–31; 1 Thess. 2:14–16, showing also that the wrath of God upon the Jew is connected with the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles by the Seraphim, the knowledge of the glory of God no longer to be confined to the Jew alone, but revealed to all nations by the burning ones with six wings, who proclaimed God's judgments on the Jews, shaking off the dust of their feet in testimony against them, while they cried: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory—for, seeing you (Jews) judge yourself unworthy of eternal life, lo! we turn to the Gentiles." Then it was that "the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried," for with the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, the Jewish dispensation passed away; for, not in vain was "the house filled with smoke"—the emblem of the wrath of God. Deut. 29:20; Psa. 74:1, 18:8; Isa. 65:5.

Isaiah understands these portentous symbols, for he says, "Woe is me! for I am undone (cut off—see margin) because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips!" To discover the full import of these words, Scripture must expound Scripture. What would a Jew understand by the expression, "A man of unclean lips?" See Lev. 13:45, 46. The leper was plainly *cut off* from the services of the temple, from the presence of God. See Lev. 15:31. In the uncleanness here spoken of, leprosy was included: all the different kinds of uncleanness are here summed up, and death shown to be the penalty of defiling the sanctuary. Isaiah saw this vision in the days of Uzziah, the king of Judah, who was a leper, and because of his leprosy was "cut off from the house of the Lord," and "dwelt alone in a several house until the day of his death." Apt type of the now leprous Jewish nation, "abiding many days" "among the nations," yet separate from them, "without a sacrifice and without an Ephod," "cut off from the house of the Lord!" (Rom. 11:22.)

Digitized by Google

Of the then leprous condition of the nation Isaiah was well aware, having already described it: "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." The *head* (the king) had been thrust out of the temple because the leprosy was seen to rise up in his forehead. (Lev. 13:43, 44; 2 Chron. 26:19.) Of the corruption of the head, the members of the body politic very naturally partook, and Isaiah humbly felt that he also as a member of this body should rend his clothes, uncover his head, put a covering upon his upper lip, and cry, "Unclean, unclean!" It is evident, then, that impressed with a sense of his own sinfulness, Isaiah, in humility, here calls himself a leper (spiritually), and knowing the degeneracy of his nation, speaks of the people as affected with the same sore disease, so that, as a dweller among them, he contracted ceremonial pollution, and was thus, independently of his own defilement, unfitted to appear in the house of the Lord.

To prove that the words "cut off," are closely connected with the idea of ceremonial defilement caused by leprosy or its antitype, see Lev. 15:31; Num. 5:2, 3; 12:14, 15; 2 Kings 5:27; 7:3; Ezek. 7:20, 25. (See margin.)

Well might Isaiah exclaim, "Woe is me! for I am undone (cut off), for *mine eyes have seen the King*, the Lord of Hosts"—if, by the ceremonial law, the leper was shut out from the sanctuary of God, under penalty of death!

If the word "undone" be translated "struck dumb," this also was the case with the leper—"the leper shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry 'unclean, unclean,' that all might avoid him." "He shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be;" no intercourse with any one; thus "struck dumb."

All that is included in and expressed by the words "cut off," the Jews have been suffering from the day of their rejection of Christ, when their blindness reached its climax (of which sore spiritual disease leprosy was a type), since then *cast out* of God's presence, *removed* from His land, *separated* from all the peculiar privileges they once enjoyed as God's people, *shut out* from His favor!

Does not this view of Isaiah's words, "Woe is me! for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips," harmonize with the obvious meaning of his whole vision, namely, "that it had relation to the rejection of Christ by the Jews," (and their after hatred of the gospel and its preachers, for then their measure of guilt was filled—the leprosy of the nation was fully developed), "and their consequent calamities even to this day." (Matt. 23:32; 1 Thess. 2:16.)

"Isaiah saw the Lord"—Jehovah, Israel's covenant God—"sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up," while he looked upon this throne of judgment, "the posts of the door moved, and the house was filled with smoke"—fearful symbols, reminding him of the terrific register of woes denounced against his people in case of disobedience, by their King, Jehovah. See Lev. 26; Deut. 28. And could Isaiah, conscious of his own sinfulness and shortcomings, and dwelling among those whose touch was defiling, hope to escape in the general calamity? for some of the judgments threatened might be near at hand. Therefore his cry: "Woe is me!" Our covenant God calls to judgment, and those who have defiled His sanctuary, shall neither be pitied nor spared. (Ezek. 5: 5–11; Isai. 24:5, 6.)

"One of the Seraphim takes a live coal from off the altar and touches Isaiah's lips, saying, 'Thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged.'" It is not given to angels to handle the live coals from off the altar of burnt-offering or of incense. The gospel cry was intrusted to human, not to angelic beings! It is rather remarkable that a healed leper was not accounted clean until a burnt-offering and a meat-offering had been offered up for him upon the altar of burnt offering. See Lev. 14:20. How wonderful the connection that may be traced between the different parts of the Bible! So, the Jewish nation will be "saved from all their uncleannesses;" Ezek. 36:29; cleansed of their spiritual leprosy when they in "heart turn to the Lord;" when

Digitized by Google

they "look upon Him whom they have pierced, and mourn," and thus are touched by the live coals of the altar. And the Church is fitted for its duty of proclaiming the gospel only in proportion as it handles aright these live coals —knows Christ crucified.

"The burning coal *may* symbolize the Holy Spirit; so, in the resemblance of fiery tongues, came down this Spirit on the Apostles, and thence they themselves were as burning coals, scattered through the nations, blest incendiaries of the world, setting it on fire with the love of Christ." "This coal taken from the altar may denote the deriving of the Spirit from Jesus Christ, our Priest, altar, sacrifice, and all, by which we are purified and made fit for His service."

The burning ones are represented in motion, for where there is life there is activity; at the same time they cover their faces and their feet, indicative of the humility and the self-forgetfulness that should characterize gospel messengers, "and as one cried unto another" *responsively*, so there is but one gospel, but one message; Christ's heralds go forth, teaching all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and as "His train filled the temple," even to the outer court—the court of the Gentiles—so the whole earth is now full of His glory, and not the sanctuary alone. And, coincident with the symbolic cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory," the posts of the door moved, and the house was filled with smoke. Most significant combination of symbols! What more offensive than the smoke of an expiring lamp! And such was the Jewish Church at the time when their heart being fat, and their ears heavy, and their hearts shut, they rejected their Messiah, as a consequence of which the whole Jewish fabric tottered and fell, so making way for the Gentile church (Rom. 16:25, 26); the seven golden candlesticks in the midst of which the Saviour now walks—would that they deserved the name of Seraphim—burning ones! In that connection let us turn our attention to Acts 4:13–33, where we find that Peter and John, having, through the power of resurrection might (Acts 1:18) cured the lame man who was laid daily at the gate of the temple called Beautiful, preached to the people Jesus and the resurrection, and testified to them that it was in the name of Jesus only—the risen one—that the cure had been wrought. "And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them and put them in hold. And it came to pass on the morrow that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, &c., were gathered together at Jerusalem to testify that they *could not deny* that a notable miracle had been done in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth; but still lest the knowledge of this, which was already by their own confession manifest to all them that dwelt at Jerusalem, should spread further among the people, they called the Apostles and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus, and having further threatened them they let them go." Truly there was a noisome smoke then ascending from the Jewish lamp and filling the house! "The Apostles (the burning ones who had refused to be silent) being let go, went to their own company and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with *one accord*, and when they had prayed the place *was shaken* where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost (they had handled the live coals), and they spake the word of God with boldness." Thus, as the Seraphim cried, saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory," so the Apostles, burning with love and zeal, for "great grace was upon them all," after again and again preaching in the temple, giving there the true light, while the Jewish lamp was going out, went forth preaching to all nations, so filling the whole earth with the glory of God; and as "one cried to another," showing agreement, so the Apostles preached ONE name—"lifted up their voice to God with ONE accord, and the multitude of them that believed at

Digitized by Google

their word were of ONE heart and of ONE soul."

In conclusion may I ask, which is most in harmony with all the symbols and all the different parts of Isaiah's vision, and also with its general import, and which seems to have a greater number of points of connection with other portions of Scripture, the idea that the Seraphim represent angels, or preachers of the gospel? for such all the Church should be!

May God make us all worthy the name of Seraphim—burning ones—glowing with love for Christ and zeal for His glory.

E. Y.

PRESERVED BLAMELESS.

"I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 THESS. 5 : 23.

I. *What is it to be preserved blameless?*—The holy apostle always manifested a great degree of affection for his converts, and interest in their spiritual advancement. This fervent prayer shows the ardor of his attachment, his zeal, and the one absorbing and controlling object of his life, viz, an insatiable desire that God should be glorified in everything with which he was connected, and over which he exercised any influence. He also recognizes a high degree of religious attainment as possible in this life—the prerogative of each individual, for which he is earnestly expected to labor—and without which he cannot be presented *complete* in Christ Jesus. He is complete in one sense—so far as the non-imputation of sin to him is concerned—the application of atoning blood having removed all that far from him; but he is incomplete as judged by the standard of perfect obedience. "Ye are my friends if ye do *whatsoever* I command you." If we only partially comply with His commands, surely our obedience is very defective, and we can scarcely be considered blameless.

When we, in holy baptism, renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, it is equivalent to a promise that body, soul, and spirit shall be preserved blameless for the Lord, because our whole nature external and internal is exposed to constant temptations from these sources, and we thus bind ourselves to be coworkers with the Holy Spirit in resisting their influence. This co-operation is not merely passive, but it must be practical, and we must have a distinct and intelligent perception of what we are required to shun and resist.

Many seem to suppose that all they have to do is to appropriate the atoning work and promises of our blessed Saviour, and to sit down at their ease and quietly enjoy them. They do not appear to apprehend that the reception of these involves a corresponding responsibility and obligation; nor seem to realize that the commands are quite as much their portion as the promises; and that a *full* participation in the glories promised, is entirely dependent upon the manner in which we have participated in our dear Lord's labors and sufferings. It is only to those who have partaken of His cup that such promises apply at all. "If we *suffer* with Him, we shall also reign with Him." It is through *much* tribulation that we shall inherit the kingdom, and a *daily* cross we must bear in this our probationary state.

With all that we *can* do, we are only slothful and unprofitable servants; and it is an inestimable privilege that we must only look to atoning blood for salvation; and that our works do not affect this at all; it is sweet, in spite of our manifold imperfections, to be able confidently to claim the blessed promises, and to look away from ourselves with loathing and distrust; but, yet, because everything has been done for us, we are not to say that we can do nothing—that God knows the weakness of our frame, and does not require anything from fallen humanity.

We have heard persons argue in this way, and the consequence of this Antinomian delusion has been that they have made such feeble efforts to serve God, that they have very naturally followed the bent of their carnal inclinations, and brought much discredit upon the religion they professed. And many again say that the literal observance of Christ's commands implies an austerity and asceticism that are not practicable; and having this per-

Digitized by Google

suasion, of course they make no effort to observe them. They cannot be peculiar—it is so disagreeable to be the subject of remark and criticism—and so they make a compromise between the world and their conscience, and most frequently end by becoming altogether worldly in feeling and practice.

Body, soul, and spirit must be preserved blameless, and so neither our hearts nor physical presence must be found in the ways of sin. It implies a crucifixion of all that is carnal in our inclinations, and a rigid self-abnegation of all the pleasures and enjoyments of this life that are manifestly at variance with the cross-bearing existence of the servant of Christ. We are not to look for our enjoyment or rest here; nor to spare our flesh and spirit any hardship that God's providence imposes. We are to shun the way of ungodly men, and to set our faces against any compounding with the pleasures, and practices of the world on the part of professing Christians. This will not be popular, we know, but is it not part of the sacrifice we are expected to make for our blessed Saviour? "If we were of the world, the world would love its own."

This self-denial extends not merely to the outward pleasures and practices of the sinful world, but the word implies also an inward crucifixion. Our affections, tastes, appetites, and will must be in complete subjugation to the requirements of our Heavenly Father. Things that may be good in themselves we are to relinquish, if they are in conflict with His holy will. If He decrees us intense suffering as the needful disciplinary process for our complete purification, and this involves the loss of the sweet and innocent endearments of our nature; of friends, home, country, even life itself, our hearts must cheerfully respond: "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight." We must not make personal enjoyment and comfort the first aim and object of our lives, but we must hold them in strict subservience to God's will, ready to be relinquished at a moment's warning, and participating in all temporal things with a moderation and abstemiousness which plainly indicate that the evanescent pleasures of this life cannot beguile our hearts from that unseen but "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Paul took *pleasure* in necessities, reproaches, afflictions, and even in being as the offscouring of the world. The early Christians took *joyfully* the spoiling of their goods; but how many Christians are there now who do not murmur and repine at the loss of their temporal comforts, and esteem that as almost the greatest calamity which can befall them? Are not many of them eating and drinking with the worldly, smiting their fellow-servants, and saying, "My Lord delayeth His coming?" Does not daily observation confirm the truth of this? Alas! "When the Son of Man cometh will he find faith on the earth," or even obedience to His plain commands on the part of His professed disciples? The wheat and tares must grow together until the harvest; and it implies a very offensive degree of self-righteousness to withdraw from organizations in which the tares abound, as only He who has the attribute of omniscience can properly discriminate between those who are His, and those who only have "the form of godliness;" but shall not *our* blameless conduct verify the Saviour's declaration, that He has also a plentiful crop of wheat to gather into His garner? If the restraining influence of the wheat is withdrawn, to what lengths may not the tares go?

And if we should not participate in the pleasures and practices of this present evil world, neither should we shrink from the severe, but salutary, discipline exercised by God to withdraw our affections from it, and to concentrate them exclusively upon himself. Where our treasures are, there will our hearts be also; and if we bask only in prosperity's sun, and possess alone the good and pleasant things of the world, it is almost impossible to prevent our hearts being set upon that which so conduces to our enjoyment. The command is plain: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." It is the highest proof of love our Saviour can bestow to call us to a

Digitized by Google

participation in His sufferings. It is only those He *loves* that He rebukes and chastens, and if we are without chastisement, whereof *all* are partakers, *we are not sons*. Oh, if we had the greatness and sublimity of soul to comprehend our dear Lord's unparalleled agonies, we would indeed esteem it a joy and honor to endure everything for Him. And this should be the primary motive to the cheerful endurance of suffering—an intense sense of obligation to Him, and an earnest desire to glorify Him, rather than the hope of the highest honors of the kingdom. These are the sequence, however, to a career of joyful labor and suffering for His sake.

II. *How shall we be preserved blameless?*—As God in His sovereign mercy has called us, He also will preserve us blameless unto His heavenly kingdom. Whilst we have no strength in ourselves, and are to avoid temptation; to abstain from every evil thing as far as our moral disability renders us competent, we are to look ever to the Omnipotent One for aid, who has promised that we shall hear a voice saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." "The just shall live by faith," justified by faith, and preserved blameless by faith. Whilst our efforts, resolutions, and struggles are inefficacious in themselves, yet if we hope only for success through the finished work of our Lord and Saviour, we believe they will not be unacceptable. They prove our *desire* to render perfect obedience to His commands, and He who knows our mortal structure to be only of dust, will have respect to the feeble offering. In sincerity we must present our body, soul and spirit, subject entirely to His disposition, with the unalterable determination to crucify whatever pertains thereto that is in conflict with His will and requirements. We are to believe that *all things* work together for good to those who love God, and to rest sweetly contented under the most trying dispensations, and not in our presumptuous arrogance, undertaking to direct the Ruler of the Universe in reference to our individual government, when we know that we cannot make one hair upon our head white or black.

We are firmly to believe that there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. We are to *realize* that our sins are expiated by His atoning blood—that blood which cleanseth from all sin—and to rest calmly and without distrust in that most glorious truth. This faith is not to supersede daily repentance, sorrow for sin, and daily endeavors and desires to become holier and purer. The Christian life is constantly progressive, and shineth more and more unto the perfect day; but it is to furnish us an abiding consciousness that we are forever safe in Christ Jesus, and that no one can pluck us from His hand. It is to fortify us against that despair which would otherwise prove our ruin, when we are overtaken by a fault in consequence of strong temptation, or the infirmities of our still unredeemed human natures. We are to have faith in, and *appropriate* the expiatory virtues and life-giving powers of that atoning blood, as made effectual to us through His holy sacraments, that we may grow in grace thereby, and bear much fruit to His honor and glory. When we are *thrown* into temptation—not when we seek it—we are to believe that we shall not be tempted above that we are able to bear, but to trust that a way of escape will be opened. We are *not* to do evil that good may come, from a faint hope that the worldly may be influenced for good thereby. Let us compromise the immutable truth of God to the smallest extent, and trifle with our consciences in the least degree, and we will quickly feel how ineffectual is our influence for good, and how impotent we are to resist evil.

We are to *shun* the world, its concomitant pleasures and pursuits. We dare not make common cause with it; there can be no compromise between Christ and Belial; their spirits are so diverse they can never be made to harmonize, and the attempt to serve two rival potentates can only end in sorrow and shame. Oh, for the devotion to Christ possessed by the early Christians, for their self-denial, renunciation of the world, crucifixion of the flesh, and faith and love. Let us strive

Digitized by Google

to emulate their example, that when tribulations arise because of the word, we may not so soon become offended, but rejoice with them that the martyr's cross must precede the martyr's crown.

III. *Until when are we to be preserved blameless?*—The answer is, unto the coming of the Lord. Not a spiritual coming, not a providential visitation, for then it must only be for a limited duration, but until He shall come in all the plenitude of glory and power to perfect that which our inability has not fully accomplished, and to finish his grand work of redemption in every department of creation. Preserved blameless, by faith in Christ Jesus through all time, we are transformed completely into His glorious image at His coming, and the process of purification and redemption finished.

Is not this blessed consummation worth all the pain, the sorrow, toil, self-denial, and ignominy that human nature is able to bear in this present evil world? Should we not aspire to it with all our hearts, and pray devoutly that by any means we may attain thereto? If we do not watch and long for His coming, and have the department of His household intrusted to our supervision in perfect order for His reception, shall we be found blameless when an account of our stewardship is demanded? Could anything be more censurable than a feeling of indifference in regard to the return of Him who has endured for us inconceivable agony, and to whom we are indebted for eternal life itself? If we are so satisfied with the present state of things in the world, and participate in its enjoyments, and covet its riches and honors, shall we care to relinquish them? There may be a crown and kingdom in reversion, but if we are *satisfied* with our present transient inheritance, shall we trouble ourselves to establish our title? No law of primogeniture gives our Jewish brethren priority over us; and if we can prove a partnership in the toils and sorrows of the King of kings, although only poor obscure vassals, we can expect to participate in the glories and honors of His grand and beautiful kingdom. We dare not think of this, for we freely admit we do not comprehend it. This prospect of being in our Redeemer's presence forever; of enjoying His love and approbation to the full; of having sin effectually eradicated; of even an approximation to His holiness; of serving Him day and night without satiety, will be glory and honor sufficient for all eternity! Let us labor and pray for this end. M. E. S.

EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY.

MR. EDITOR: Your remarks on "*the order and time*" gave no small measure of satisfaction, to *one inquirer* at least. I have, for several years, regarded the pre-millenial coming of Jesus Christ as established beyond a peradventure, by the teachings of the Bible. Yet I have been rather incredulous as to the different stages in the first resurrection, as taught in the *Prophetic Times*. I begin to perceive, however, that the harmony of the Scriptures makes that article essential. Yet it is hard to believe that the declaration in 1 Thess. 4: 16, "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God," does not mean a public and open manifestation.

The views given in the latter part of the article respecting the new earth and its inhabitants, and the time of its manifestation, are altogether satisfactory. It is like a self-evident truth, that the glorified saints, and the nations that cultivate the earth and multiply and replenish it, can be joint occupants of the same planet. Neither does this proposition present any difficulty to me. Indeed, I regard the thought as a pleasing one, "that those who neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God, will have to do with the generations in the flesh, only as angels in preceding ages have had to do with the heirs of salvation." I fully concur with you in the opinion, that though the earth and its surroundings will undergo great and important changes at the beginning of the millennium, yet they will not become the new heavens and the new earth in their completeness until its close. J. H.

Digitized by Google

WHEAT AND TARES.

"The tares must grow until the harvest."

THE clouds are black above us, and the sun has
ceased to shine;
The lurid rays of fiery woe glare fiercely all
around;
Within, without, around, beneath, an influence all
malign,
Is seen and felt through all the world—its Prince
is yet unbound.

The hands hang down, the hearts are faint, of faith-
ful ones and true;
They toil in vain—they work for naught—the
evil triumphs now!
O, mighty One! We thought Thy truth would
every heart renew;
That sin and hell were vanquished foes; that
all to Thee must bow.

We dreamed the night of sorrow had fled away for
aye;
That crime had held its carnival; that guilt had
ceased to reign;
That we and all mankind should see Thy blessed
holy sway,
And feel redemption's sufferings were not endured
in vain.

Hast Thou forgotten us, O Lord? Remove per-
plexity,
And show us why Thy promise fails, the evil still
doth grow.
"Thou hast misunderstood my Word—the tares as
well as Thee,
Must grow until the harvest comes—the cross for
thee below.

"Redemption comes, my weary ones, lift up your
heads on high;
The heavier the woes that press, the nearer is the
day;
The storm must break, the lightning flash—but on
thee by and by,
The sun will pour his golden light—his every
gladsome ray."

Selections.

THE LAST TIME.

"Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."—1 JOHN 2: 18.

THESE words, and those that precede, are very striking. They are like two trumpet-blasts or thunder-peals. They are a warning against worldliness, and a testimony against this present evil world. They sound like Noah's voice, "condemning the world" of his day (Heb. 11: 7); and come well from the lips of him whose name was Boanerges, or son of thunder. They sound like a trumpet at midnight, startling men from their sleep. "Love not the world." Why? For two special reasons: (1.) It is not of the Father; (2.) It passeth way, and he only is imperishable who is linked with God and His will; "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

Then, as if with yet a louder note of warning, the trumpet sounds again. It utters the voice of warning in words not to be mistaken: "Little children, it is the last time." But why such a loud note of warning? Because the danger is great. What danger? The danger from *Antichrist*, and the danger from *many Antichrists*. We are to take heed lest we be led away with the error of the wicked one, and the delusion of Antichrist in any form, whether the *last* form, or any of the forms of preceding ages.

Let us listen, then, to the announcement. It is doubtless for our days as well as for the age of the apostles; nay, even more for us than for them.

I. *It is the last time.* "It is the last HOUR," is the more exact rendering. This is not man's conjecture, dictated by terror, or despair, or vain calculations; it is the declaration of the Spirit of God. All along the ages has this voice been sounding in the world's ears, "It is the last time;" it sounds more loudly in our days. Once and again in past centuries the Church took it up; and alarmed at the wick-

Digitized by Google

edness of their times, and at the judgments of God, proclaimed that Christ was coming. He did not come in their day. They died, and were not caught up to meet their Lord in the air. But does that silence or deaden the solemn voice? Does that falsify the words of our text? Shall we say, "My Lord delayeth His coming," or, "Where is the promise of His coming?" Shall we conclude, "Ah, He is not coming in our day; perhaps not for centuries; perhaps not at all." No; but let us awake, and be sober, and watch. These voices in the Church have risen and died down again and again. They have risen in our own day; they will sooner or later be found true. Shall this be in our day? The signs are multiplying—signs of good, signs of evil, overspreading infidelity, yet the gospel preached to all nations; shall we not take up the apostolic watchword, "Little children, it is the last time?" How near Christ may be, we know not. Let us be ready! Men say, Oh, these days of ours are the beginning, not the end of days; science is widening itself, civilization is spreading, superstitions are falling to pieces, the world is improving, a few years more and we shall be all right. Is it so? In one sense this is the beginning of days, as the night is the beginning of the morning; but that is all. For it is night; the night of sin, the night of unbelief, the night of human pride and self-will, the night of apostasy. Yes; it is night, whatever may be man's boast of *progress*. It is night, and neither dawn nor day. The apostle meant what he said when he uttered these solemn words, "It is the last time;" as Peter meant when he said, "The end of all things is at hand;" and as the Lord meant when He said, "Behold, I come quickly."

II. *Antichrist shall come.* The Jews had gathered from their Old Testament Scriptures a great deal concerning Antichrist. They found Him in the Psalms and in the prophets; and hence, when the Lord and His apostles took up the subject, they found the idea already rooted in the Jewish mind. They spoke much of Antichrist. They warned the Church against him and his delusions. Antichrist means two things: (1.) One who opposes Christ; (2.) One who puts himself in the room of Christ. In both of these senses the Church was taught to expect Antichrist. This adversary and rival of Christ was to embody in himself, directly or indirectly, all human errors and delusions, everything that would attract the natural man, and lead him away from Christ. He was to present himself as the substitute for Christ, claiming the confidence and homage of the race. All evil is to be concentrated in him; yet evil so adorned and beautified that men will be won by it, and by him in whom it is exhibited. Through him they will learn to call evil good and good evil; to put light for darkness and darkness for light. He will be Satan's representative; the idol or god of the natural man; the fulness of all natural wisdom, natural goodness, natural excellence—it may be, natural religion, set up by Satan to steal away men's hearts, and withdraw their homage and affection from the Christ of God. Oh, solemn truth! Antichrist shall come! And when he comes the world will receive him in preference to the Christ of God; even as of old they cried, "Not this man, but Barabbas."

III. *Even now are there many Antichrists.* Antichristian delusion had begun in the apostle's days. Men were arising to deny Christ; to set up another Christ of their own, a Christ of the intellect, a Christ of the sense, a Christ of the imagination. Long ere the first century closed, there were many Antichrists, pretended Christs, substitutes for the Son of God. Every age has produced its Antichrists; all of them earnests of, and preparations for, the greater Antichrist of the very last days, when perilous times shall come. In and by all these Antichrists Satan is working, not only to exalt himself, but to dishonor Christ; working even by means of men who laugh at the existence of an evil spirit. He is working by means of error, pure error; also by error in connection with truth, and truth in connection with error. He is exalting the natural at the expense of the supernatural. He is exalting science above Scripture. He is denying human evil, and upholding human goodness, creaturehood in opposition to Godhead, intellect in opposition

Digitized by Google

to revelation, self-improvement in opposition to regeneration by the Holy Ghost, worldly refinement in opposition to the example of the Christ and His true spirituality. Everything in the shape of human "progress" is welcomed, without considering what it is or whence it comes. But the progress of the natural man is, after all, an illusion. So long as humanity remains unregenerate, there can be no progress which God will recognize as such. The one true progress is that begun, carried through, and consummated by the Holy Ghost; a progress quite distinct from all that which man calls by that name.

Let us, then, be on our guard against the Antichrists of our age. Even now are there many Antichrists; and this intellectual, literary, and scientific age is prolific in such. This proves it to be the last time. Let us take the warning! Beware of the strong delusion. Keep your eye on Jesus Himself; that only will keep you from being led astray by His counterfeits. Let the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, dwell in you, and Glorify Christ in you. Sleep not. Watch!

NAPOLEON AND THE PLEBISCITUM.

After the lapse of nearly twenty centuries, the world is again to witness, in a modified form, one of the most important institutions of the old Roman Republic. The Universal Empire has come and gone, passing completely into history, but that principle of the Roman law which recognizes the right of even plebeians to make their own statutes is as valid in the new empire of to-day as it was under the old Republic. The Emperor of France, at once the most powerful and the weakest of monarchs, asks that the people, exercising their highest right, secure him and his family on the throne. The French people will be called on in their truly sovereign capacity to determine whether "Liberty shall be placed under the protection of the empire and the dynasty." Emile Girardin, the celebrated politician, declares the question one of revolution. "L'Empire, c'est la Paix." But do the French desire a lasting peace of this character? They must quickly decide.

When Servius Tullius, first divided the "Plebs"—those ancient inhabitants of Rome, of whom neither language nor history remains, except that they were conquered by the haughty Patricians—into thirty tribes, for the purpose of military discipline and the collection of taxes, he little thought that these would prescribe the law for his own descendants. When he allowed them to assemble in their *comitia*, he and his successors, kings and consuls, proposed such changes in the law relating to the Plebeians alone as they deemed fit, and the submissive Plebeians were content to express their wishes by inscribing on their tablets either U. R. (*Uti Rogas*), assent, or A. (*antiquo legem*), dissent; but, as they learned their power, they demanded the right to elect "Tribunes of the People," to protect them from the wantonness and avarice of the Patricians, and these Tribunes ultimately proposed laws to the *comitia tributia*, or assembly of the Plebs, which, when passed by them, were binding even upon the arrogant and unwilling Senate. Will the French nation, in the nineteenth century, enter into the long apprenticeship the Roman Plebeians served before they show their power? Will they deliver liberty to the protecting care of the "empire and the dynasty," or will they assert that sort of liberty which is said to protect itself?

Of course the Emperor will exert his power to the utmost to secure the final success of his life. On the other hand, all the elements of opposition, the Republicans, Bourbonists, and Orleanists, are united in their efforts to defeat the success of the Plebiscitum; they are fighting for life, and care little for the color of the flag of their allies. They fear that the success of the Plebiscitum will be followed by the persecution of the opponents of the Emperor's schemes, no matter from what source that opposition arises. The Emperor has heretofore been able, by playing these opposition parties against each other, to secure a full majority of "official candidates" in the seats of the *corps Legislatif*; but he must now meet them arrayed with united front against him. Never before has the vote of an humble elector been of so much importance to himself, and so much con-

Digitized by Google

cern to the parties. The events of the present year, young as it still is, are not calculated, it must be owned, to add to that power which the Emperor has heretofore wielded over the minds of the people. The strike of the workmen at La Creuzot is only "practically" ended by the presence and aid of the Emperor's troops in considerable force; the assassination of Victor Noir, and the acquittal of Prince Pierre Bonaparte by the extraordinary tribunal which tried him on the criminal charge, coupled with the judgment against him to pay damages to the murdered man's family in the *civil* suit, are little likely to increase the power of the Government party.

What influence the promulgation of the dogma of Papal infallibility may have, coupled with the withdrawal of the French troops from Rome, leaving the Pope in daily dread of Mazzini and a fresh irruption, cannot be easily foretold, but a true Jesuit never forgets or forgives an enemy to his doctrines. Louis Napoleon's fate approaches its crisis, and this year will settle the much-vexed question: "Is he the greatest statesman of modern times?"

Believing that he is, and entertaining a very lively hope that this crowning act of his career may be successful, we observe the impending struggle with an interest which is only increased by the dangers and the odds against which he will have to contend.

NOTE.—The latest intelligence from France indicates that Louis Napoleon has been entirely successful in this new scheme. It is another triumph, the results of which remain to be developed.—ED.

WATCH AND PRAY.

"Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is."—MARK 13 : 33.

THERE is a threefold exhortation here in reference to the coming of the Son of Man: (1) take heed; (2) watch; (3) pray.

I. *Take heed.* Or "look;"—look about you;—have your *eyes* on the alert; mark every object,—persons and things; let nothing escape your notice. A Christian is not to close his eyes and see nothing here. He is left here that he may both see and hear. And out of every sight and sound he is to extract something that will profit, quicken, stimulate, sanctify. What he sees each hour as he goes out and in; what he hears in conversation, or reads in books and newspapers; all are to furnish materials for his growth. But perhaps the special reference in the expression "take heed," is to the previous discourse concerning the signs of his coming. Keep your eyes open to these. Understand what is passing day by day; interpret events; connect them with the coming of the Son of Man. You see false Christs; you hear a Babel of opinions; you mark the new forms of immorality and infidelity; you are startled with the bold assaults made on Scripture, and on the Christ of God, on His blood, and cross, and righteousness;—connect all these with the coming of the Lord; interpret them as signs of the last days; do not treat them as common things; do not close your eyes upon them; do not be indifferent to them; do not admire them as tokens of intellectual development and human progress. Understand them all according to God's purpose and mind. Examine them in the light of apostolic teachings and warnings. Be not deceived concerning them. Beware of the strong delusion. "In understanding be men."

II. *Watch.* Keep awake. Be not like the virgins who all slumbered and slept. Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. How often was the word "watch" upon the Lord's lips! His apostles took it up in their epistles; and in the Apocalypse the Lord resumes it,—"Blessed is he that *watcheth*." There is a tendency to slumber. As the disciples, both on the transfiguration hill and in Gethsemane, fell asleep, so do we in the most solemn circumstances and times. The spirit may be willing, but the flesh is weak. The atmosphere of earth seems loaded with slumberous vapors. This present evil world exercises a soporific influence; Satan, its god, the prince of the power of the air, does all he can to lull us asleep. It is a struggle to keep awake. Hence the necessity for the solemn and startling words "awake," "arise," "watch." Be ever on your guard, as sentinels at their post; as watchmen on the towers of some be-

Digitized by Google

leaguered fort; as seamen navigating some difficult stream with windings, and sand-banks, and rapids; or as servants sitting up at night to wait for their master's return. "What I say unto you, I say unto all, WATCH." "Be vigilant, for your adversary the devil walketh about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." In the midst of a heedless world and an unwatchful church, how needful the perpetual warning, "Watch." And all the more as we see the day approaching. The more that we see a world "sleeping," or wasting its hours in vanity, and pleasure, and lust, and gayety, the more let us feel the necessity for resisting the widespread influence and keeping awake. "Let us not sleep as do others."

III. *Pray.* "Watch and *pray* that ye enter not into temptation." He spoke a parable that men ought always to *pray* and not to faint. "The end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober, and watch unto *prayer*." Prayer is the attitude of a helpless, needy man; whose only refuge is in God. No help *within;* no help *from man;* only help in Jehovah's omnipotence;—that is the meaning of prayer. Prayer is always needed; most in days of evil and trouble. Do we feel our need of prayer? Do we know what it is to pray? Do we delight in prayer? Do we pray in faith? John Welch's knees were hard with his constant prayer,—are ours in danger of becoming so? "Pray much," said Alexander Peden; "it's praying folk that will get through the storm."

(1.) *Pray for your own needy selves.* Nothing but prayer will keep us steadfast, or enable us to grow, or make us more than conquerors.

(2.) *Pray for the needy church of God.* God has a church, and will have a church everywhere on earth; but in some ages that church is low and barren; more earthly than heavenly; her light dim; her step feeble; her strength small. It is so now. Pray, then, for a needy church, that in all these respects God would visit her; raising her up; reviving her; re-kindling her light; re-invigorating her strength: re-adorning her with all gifts and graces; re-clothing her in apostolic raiment, and sending her forth to do His work with the old power and success of primitive days.

(3.) *Pray for a needy world.* It is blind, and knows it not; poor, and thinks itself rich; foolish, and thinks itself wise. It is doubly needy. It is not aware of the extent of its ruin, and alienation, and depravity; not alive to its danger and hopeless prospects; not anticipating its doom. There is a hardening, and searing, and blinding process going on in connection with "modern progress." The men of earth now are like the Antediluvians in the days of Noah; like Sodom, on its last day before the judgment came; like Pompeii, ere the volcano poured its torrents of fire upon it; like Babylon, in the night when Cyrus seized it; like Babylon the great, in the day of its pride. Oh, pray for a needy world! Not merely for its civilization, or its reformation, or its intellectual and moral elevation; but for something deeper and more decided than these; something without which morality, and literature, and intellect will profit nothing; something without which its science, its eloquence, its wisdom, its music, its proficiency in the fine arts, will not avail.

Our Lord's reason for all this is solemn,—"Ye know not when the time is." The "time" is that referred to in the previous verse; the unknown and untold hour of his arrival. It is this great event that forms the urgent reason for taking heed, for watching, for prayer. He is coming! We know not when. He is coming! It may be soon. This is no time for carelessness, or sleep, or prayerlessness. Church of the living God! up from thy bed of sloth; to thy knees; watch and pray. Man of God, enter into thy closet,—plead with all thy might.

O heedless sinner! wilt thou not awake! Arise, call upon thy God. Betake thyself to the great refuge.—*Bonar.*

THE CONQUEROR'S REWARD.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—REV. 3 : 21.

SURPASSING honor! amazing dignity! incredible exaltation! And yet it is strictly

Digitized by Google

true. It is neither to be "spiritualized" nor explained away as meaning something not literally represented by the words. "*The Truth*" says it, and He will do it. It is the Great Conqueror's promise to those who conquer by and for Him; the Chief Victor's reward to the victors that follow in His steps, and exhibit His spirit, and fight His battles, and remain steadfast to His truth amidst the whirlwind of opposition which loyalty to the coming King occasions in an unholy world, the language of whose heart is, "We will not have this man to reign over us." And what a reward it is! No king of earth ever bestowed such honor upon his favorite. No poetic flight of imagination ever placed classic hero upon such a lofty seat of empire.

Look at it, as steadily as its dazzling grandeur will permit, ye who daily groan, being burdened with the infirmities of the mortal state; ye who are sometimes half-tempted to give up all in despair because of the difficulties of the conflict and the severity of the discipline; ye who experience the pain of being suspected, shunned, and evil spoken of by fellow-Christians, because the tradition of the elders and the theology of the schools are nothing to you if the Holy Scriptures have taught you something higher, nobler, more glorious and Godlike; ye who are oppressed with a sense of your utter unworthiness to bear the name of the glorious Occupant of Jehovah's throne; and ye who are bewildered by the miserable heartlessness in Christ's service of thousands who call Him Lord, and the utter failure of all religious organizations, not only to establish righteousness in the earth, but also to prevent the voice of truth from being silenced, in many places where she has a nominal home, by the din of militant theologians, the champions of rival creeds, and the defiant shouts of the Goliaths of unbelief. Yes! look at it until the magnificent reality fill the field of vision, and the surpassing love of the Royal Promiser compel you to fall at His feet in wonder and worship, and to determine then and there, that you *will* conquer for His dear sake—throne or no throne the issue, just as He pleases! Let the text interpret itself. It needs no illumination from men. Surely it is bright enough to satisfy the loftiest aspiration without any word-painting of ours. The Lord means just what He says; and we do not think He feels at all indebted to us for making Him, in a thousand instances, in our great wisdom, mean what He does *not* say.

The very thought of being enthroned with CHRIST, "the King of kings," when He ascends His own glorious throne in the coming kingdom, is enough, and more than enough, to stir a Christian man's heart to its very depth, and to nerve him with holy heroism amidst the severest trials and sorrows of this preliminary life. The shadowy, flimsy, intangible heaven of common theology is surely a self-condemned absurdity; but the inspired representation of the resurrection life of the Christian "conqueror" gives us something real, substantial, grand, with which the sanctified mind can fully sympathize—work, space, position of which we can form a distinct idea, while all has the unutterably precious commendation of being holy and permanent, and of being flooded with the glory of the Chief Conqueror's presence. He who ascended to the Father in His perfect humanity, will so come as He went—the blessed, beloved, glorious JESUS; and when He sets in order the affairs of His great kingdom, the overcomers for His sake shall have dominion with and under Him, and "reign on the earth." Be glad, then, ye patient sufferers for Christ and conscience; hold on; be faithful; fear not. Your reward is great. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."

That God should elect the kings and princes of the "world to come" from among some of the sons of men whom, by grace, He has already made sons of God and co-heirs with Christ, is very wonderful, and calls for special adoration and praise; but it is, after all, only in harmony with His revealed character, and His eternal purpose to glorify the Redeemer with a peculiar and transcendent glory. Every available tribute to His unequalled worth and work is not only right and proper in itself, but is also a public recognition of the services He has rendered to the moral universe. Of

Digitized by Google

His followers, then, some are being qualified by peculiar discipline for the principalities and royalties of the predetermined kingdom and dominion. Daring all for Christ, they shall reign with Christ. Faithful in a few things, they shall be made rulers over many things. Bold to confess the Rejected One in the face of all opposition, by Him they shall be confessed before His Father and the holy angels, when He ascends the throne of the empire that awaits him. The high qualities of holiness, fidelity, self-denial, zeal, wisdom, and moral courage in which they are trained by the Spirit of Christ, will find ample field for exercise in the grand future; and the immortality they derive from their risen Lord, will sustain them without weariness in the discharge of their princely functions. They are now at school, and if they knew what God intends by the trying tasks he sets them, they would neither murmur nor grow impatient. Every privation has its meaning; every trial, its import; every bereavement, its lesson; every disappointment, its significance; every storm, its interpretation; and every cross, its result in the world to come. The Father has no pleasure in any one of these things for its own sake. To put His little ones in pain is no joy to Him. If it were possible to make them fit for what He means them to be, and do, and enjoy, without the rough but most salutary school of personal experience, into that school He would not send them; but to take a beggar from the dunghill and set him with the princes of God is not the work of a moment. Such rapid transitions are not according to the mode of working which the Allwise has adopted. A man called from sin, pollution, ignorance, shame, and degradation, with the purpose on God's part to make him a king—not in name, but in truth and in glorious reality—must have much done in him and for him before he can possibly be *fit* to enter on such a high office. He must be pardoned, justified, adopted, cleansed, educated. Men are trained for the trades and professions of the present life, and the training in each case has, of course, strict respect to the trade or profession which the individual intends to follow. This is simply the dictate of common sense. The necessity of adaptation is its essence; and the recognition of this necessity is intuitive. Men do not reason on such a subject: the true common sense, logical sequence of the premiss is reached in a moment. But shall *that* universally recognized necessity in the affairs of threescore years and ten be ignored as unnecessary in the immeasurably higher affairs of a Millennium? "Not a novice" is one of the laws in relation to the Christian ministry; shall its principle be dispensed with in relation to the co-assessors of the Son of Man during the thousand years of righteous judgment? O that Christian men would *think*, in the light of revelation!

Another word. "To him that overcometh will *I grant* to set with me in *my throne*." Who speaks? He who, though He is Lord of all, had not where to lay His head; He who, though He is the Father's Beloved, was despised and rejected of men; He who, though He is the Dispenser of the water of life to all who shall live forever, asked a draught of water from the woman of Samaria; and He who, though He is worshipped by the angels of God, had a couple of wretched thieves as His companions in a shameful death. This is He who distributes thrones, and assigns to the conquerors their different ranks in the royalty of heaven. Now mark the lesson; it will richly repay the thought it demands. Follow Christ in the life of faith, through humility, and patience, and reproach, and rejection, and death: and when He comes He will give you honor, and glory, and immortality. Follow Christ in the spirit of earnest, thorough consecration, and the day of His revelation will be the day of your recognition. Follow Christ, with the settled conviction that the trials of the present are, in reality, tests of the qualifications that will be nesessary for high *post*-resurrection office; and when He chooses the high officers of His kingdom, He will say, "Sit with me in my throne."

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

COUNSEL FOR EVIL TIMES.

Eph. 5: 15–21.

It was once the song of a very devoted friend of God: "I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. Thy testimonies also are my delight, and they are my counsellors."(Ps. 119.) Counsellors indeed, trustworthy and true are the testimonies, the precepts, the commandments of the Lord. They are venerable counsellors: they have sprung from the ancient times, and can tell of what has been in many generations. They are honest counsellors; they never dissemble or equivocate. They are reliable counsellors; they never waver, never swerve, never mistake. But they are often neglected counsellors. People are not always pleased with what they say, and prefer flattering friends, and take to orators who tickle itching ears, or utter the fancies and desires of the carnal heart. Times sometimes come, however, when men reproach themselves for such neglect, and are disposed to give God's word its proper honor. The riotous and wayward prodigal comes to the end of his good days, and necessities make him think again of the paternal home, and of the sorrowing father whose loving counsel he once despised. There is something of a retributive providence, even in this world, under which the long careless and ungodly, by stripes and trials, are brought to ask after the Lord whom they have set at nought, and to seek the counsels they once contemned.

Such a period is that in which we live. God has been neglected, and His law forsaken, and the ill consequences are beginning to be sorely felt. The holy Apostle wrote: "*The days are evil.*" They were evil to him as a prisoner at Rome. They were evil to the Church, which was as yet but a little flock, combating with enthroned idolatry, and suffering from the hand of murderous power. They were evil with the world itself, grown old and infirm in its iniquities, and giving symptoms of its approaching dissolution. And what was true then has been more or less true ever since, and is certainly true of this present.

Bernard, the monk of Cluny, surveying the whole state of mankind in the twelfth century, sung out in his immortal verses: "*The times are very evil.*" The greatest, wisest, most honest-minded man of the sixteenth century, the sainted Luther, sadly exclaimed: "The world has grown very obstinate and headstrong." "Mankind grow daily worse and worse." "God will not, *cannot* suffer this wicked world much longer." And with all the boasted light, progress, and liberty of our day, our truest and most observant men unite in the testimony that evil is alarmingly in the ascendant, and that mankind, though freed from many an ancient tyranny, are in a state less secure and less hopeful than ever before since the beginning of our era. Only the other day, one of our most thoughtful civil judges, from his place upon the bench, in Philadelphia, solemnly declared: "*There is now a carnival of crime raging.* It spreads itself to all our great cities. Life itself is not safe in this community." And in whatever way we may account for it, to no section of society can we look, but the fact stands out before all eyes, and flashes itself into all thinking hearts, that iniquity fearfully abounds, that perils threaten and press on every side, that "*the days are evil.*"

And when disaster and disintegration is at work upon the whole fabric of human society and well-being, and disorder and unprecedented commotions are in the elements of nature herself; when times of high prices, high living, and high crimes, but of low morals, feeble piety, and poor hopes, are actually upon us; when every aspect in which things can be considered is full of solemn and mysterious portent, it certainly is time to be turning once more, in all honesty and earnestness, to the ancient and true counsellors, and to inquire diligently what God has to say to us for such

Digitized by Google

emergencies. Thanks to our gracious Lord, it is so with some. It is one of the good things of these evil days, that some are being awakened from their delusive dreams, and that, here and there, there is searching again for the clear truth, and some disposition to have respect unto God's ways, and to delight in His testimonies. And for every ear and heart thus open, God has a special message. It may be found in the passage above referred to. It is *God's counsel for evil days.*

I. "SEE THAT YE WALK CIRCUMSPECTLY, NOT AS FOOLS, BUT AS WISE."

There is a path of Christian life and behavior set before every one. It is a plain path; so plain that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein. But, in order to travel that path successfully, we must look before us, lest we be led astray and deceived by our own foolish imaginings; we must have an eye on the world around us, noting its errors and its evil ways, so as not to be seduced by its unsanctified spirit and example; we must be forecasting in our calculations, knowing what the end is to be. It is in this, that the children of light are distinguished from the children of this world. Most men have not this wisdom, but suffer their eyes to wander like the fool's eyes. They lack thoughtfulness and consideration, and mostly live along from day to day, as impulse and earthly cares propel, with no settled aim, no just understanding of what they are about, and no concern for anything except that they may have wherewith to gratify their lusts and fill themselves with momentary pleasures. But true Christians "walk circumspectly." They keep their eyes about them, and carefully survey things on every side, in order that they may make no false steps, be overtaken by no unsuspected dangers, and, if possible, secure for themselves a heavenly prize at last.

And what thus characterizes them at all times, is more especially important in evil times. As long as the traveller's path is easy and smooth through sunshine and blooming meadows, he is not necessitated to be so very careful of his steps, or so collected and concentrated in his thoughts. He may still with safety look abroad betimes, and let his eye roam over the hills and valleys that lie in the distance. But when that path becomes angular and uneven, when rocks jut out into it from the mountain side, when the footing becomes slippery and the abyss yawns beneath it, when the heavens are overspread with clouds, and the thunders roar, and the storm is abroad, when the night comes out from the woods, and the thick fogs rise up from the valleys—then the word is: "Traveller, beware; look well to thy steps; observe carefully what thou doest, lest thou be turned out of the way, and dashed to destruction!"

And such is exactly the case contemplated by the Apostle. The Christian pilgrim of today has fallen upon evil times, and God's counsel to him is: "Be on thy guard, O man; watch and pray, lest thou fall into temptation!" Considering how difficult it is, even for the most wary and diligent, to bring themselves through in safety; what present ills and dangers exist, accompanied with intimations of worse to come; what plentiful vagaries and manifold falsities float about us, like swamplights in the darkness; what vexation, passion and malcontent; what doubt, cursing and crabbed unbelief; and what fearful falls and fell mishaps, are augmenting as the time rolls on! Surely there is cause to be wide awake and watching on every side, with muscles strung for any emergency, that the head be not turned, the feet tripped, the heart deceived. Silly unconcern, fluttering like the butterfly from flower to flower, and never bethinking itself of what a day may bring forth, will not answer for such times as ours. Cowardly idleness, which lays its hands in its lap and waits for impediments to disappear, will be sure to come off wanting and destitute. Things have become too critical for dreamy trifling or indecision. As on shipboard, when the vessel's strength is giving to the storm, so now, the word is: "*Every one to his post, and every hand to the work, or utter destruction must be the fate of all!*"

Digitized by Google

WATCH!—'tis your Lord's command;
And while we speak He's near;
Mark the first signal of His hand,
And ready all appear!

II. REDEEM THE TIME.

The German Bible has it, "*order yourself according to the time*"—adapt yourself to the necessities that are upon you. Man is prone to insist that the times adapt themselves to him, and is quite unwilling to see them in any other light than that in which he wishes to have them. Are they evil? He makes himself easy over it, and will not half admit it. The husbandman hangs on to the hope of a good harvest to the last. The father has his family to live on the same in costly as in other times, unwilling to work harder or to live poorer. And then, when stark necessity confronts him, mail-clad and irresistible, and it can no longer be denied that "the days are evil," the hands drop in spiritless dejection; or there is harsh murmuring, rebellion, cursing, and blasphemy of God and Providence. But, the Christian's duty is to order himself according to the times. He who makes the times and controls the worlds is far too great, too wise, too mighty, to conform himself to man's whims, counsels, or dictations. The sailor cannot command the sea and the storm, therefore he humors them, and orders his affairs according to the weather. And as we cannot make Providence yield to us, we must make it a point to yield to Providence.

But this does not reach the full strength of the Apostle's words. What we are counselled to do is, not only to adapt ourselves to the times, but to ransom, redeem, buy back, and turn from their natural evil to our spiritual good, these days and hours as they pass. They are like prisoners sold into slavery. They are under the dominion of evil. They are in the possession of the enemy. They are to be rescued, recovered from their state as instruments of evil, and made to yield us blessing notwithstanding their evilness.

Even the worst days have their good, and may be brought over to be of sublime account. The greatest discoveries of man have originated in the greatest necessities. The sublimest achievements ever made were brought about in periods of greatest peril. The most triumphant advances have sprung from beneath the heaviest oppressions. The fruit of the vine comes to its highest perfection from the bruises of the wine-fat. Even the sorest temptations have made occasion for the most heroic virtues and the most exalted moral victories. And earth's worst days have given being to earth's best things.

But, to turn evil days to good account, is a costly thing. It is a redemption which cannot be effected without labor and without price. It is a matter demanding clear vision, prompt action, and bold decision. We dare not sit still when the enemy is upon us, nor trifle when eternal doom may hang upon the moment. We must seize each passing opportunity. We must vigorously improve every hour. We must hesitate at no cost, no pain, no sneers of men, no denial of self, no seeming singularity in the eyes of the world. Though Pharisees scorn, and Greeks laugh, and barbarians shake their heads, we must on. Though the feet bleed, and the heart ache, and the head swim, as the perils thicken and the shadows deepen, we must on; knowing that the day of greatest danger and greatest suffering is also the day of sublimest opportunity for God and for ourselves.

III. "BE NOT UNWISE, BUT UNDERSTANDING WHAT THE WILL OF THE LORD IS."

Dangerous and trying times are apt to dement men, and to take from them all discreetness and self-control. Troublous times make silly minds. Then men grope about incoherently, as if suddenly stricken blind. Though wisdom is then most needed, unwisdom grasps for the reins—and all sorts of absurd and ruinous counsels prevail. But a Christian must not give up his senses when evil days come. He must not let go his wits, and surrender all attempts at self-mastery, as if God Almighty had abdicated His throne. Let him rather bethink himself and know that Jehovah reigns—that the Lord is, in bad times as well as in good times, and that there is a Divine and

Digitized by Google

gracious purpose to be subserved by adversity as well as prosperity. The word is: Be not senseless; keep thy thoughts together; do not play the fool, but look, consider, and see, and understand what the will of the Lord is. Let the days be never so dark, they have not broken away from God's hand. He controls them. He makes them what they are. He has sent them. He is working out His own good counsels by them. They cannot harm thee. Therefore, bethink thyself, and cleave unto Him, and hope in Him.

Are the days evil? Exercise thyself to detect and rightly estimate the evil, that poison be not taken for food, nor bitter for sweet. Are the days evil? Learn to comprehend why they are so; what God means by sending them; whither they tend; what they foreshadow; what lessons they bear, and how to make the best of them.

IV. BE TEMPERATE—BE NOT DRUNK WITH WINE.

Times of trouble are particularly prone to beget sinful habits in the line of intemperance. Evil days come; the mind is harassed; sad and heavy hours of exhaustion, depression, and misery are experienced; and men go to the bottle for consolation, and hope to drown their sorrows by stupefying their souls. It is a wretched expedient, and a wretched habit, however acquired. We would hardly suppose that a sane man could ever lend himself to so degrading a slavery. "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babblings? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine." (Prov. 23.) Every feature of an intemperate man's body, every word that proceeds out of his mouth, and every stone and timber in his dwelling has a voice, and that voice ever cries, and that cry is: "*Woe to the drunkards!*" And it is amazing that intelligent men, so quick in discerning their true interests in everything else, and so considerate and prompt in providing themselves with guards and defences against what would be hurtful to their good names, their fortunes and their families, can become so infatuated as deliberately to give themselves over to a habit so manifestly, so certainly, and so overwhelmingly ruinous to everything that a man can count dear to him. In it is *ἀσωτία—dissoluteness—debauchery—profligacy*—the absence of everything conservative of life and well-being—the breaking up and scattering of all for which existence can be desirable. And such an utter negation of the properties, capacities, intentions, and good results of life, we would think enough to appal and repel any one who has any consideration in him.

But, alas, for poor depraved human nature! Even this superlative age has not yet shown itself competent, with all its boasted enlightenment and practical wisdom, to furnish an adequate protection of itself from the temptations and triumphs of the dumb bottle! And when we look at the money wasted for intoxicating liquids; at the numberless and often magnificent establishments for their sale and retail, kept up at the expense of those who drink them; at the devotion with which the rum-shops and beer-houses are frequented and patronized, week-days and Sundays, day and night; at the splendid fortunes freely laid at the feet of the worst men in the community just to guzzle; at the whisky rings, against which the government itself is powerless, and often the pliant ally, all built upon the strength of the hellish appetite for killing drink; and at the crime, suffering, poverty, brutality, wretchedness, spoliations of homes, desecrations of virtue, debasements of manhood, wastes of intellect, degradations of body, curses of time and damnation of eternity consequent upon all this, we begin to perceive what a devil's den is assaulted by this admonition. Even of old the wise man gave out the warning: "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." (Prov. 23:31, 32.) Nor is it the mere brawl of a fanatical temperance reform, but the voice of Almighty God to every man, woman, and child in Christendom, as they value the peace of earth and the blessedness of

Digitized by Google

heaven, to beware of the deceits which linger about the drinking practices of these evil days.

God offers a sublimer consolation than the bottle. He has provided a better comforter for evil days, of which we never can imbibe too much. The word is not only "Be not drunk with wine, but BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT." This is the true wine of consolation —the noblest restorative for fainting souls— the real spirit of joy, and comfort, and strength, and everlasting salvation. Imbued and charged with this life-giving wine of heaven, the heart can have no better cheer, no higher gladness, no more abiding satisfaction. And if the appetite and thirst for these heavenly inspirations were only half as strong and widespread as men's hankering after rum, what a change it would make in our world! Drinking shops would not then block up the ways to our churches; the boisterous revelries of the drunken would not then break in upon and disturb our moments of devotion; the streets would not then groan, as they do, with blood, obscenity, and crime; and the cause of God would not so languish in the earth. O, to be filled with this holy fire!

V. SPEAK TO YOURSELVES IN PSALMS, AND HYMNS, AND SPIRITUAL SONGS, SINGING AND MAKING MELODY IN YOUR HEART TO THE LORD.

There is a power in hymns and melody. They carry strength, nerve, comfort, healing, to the afflicted soul. No matter what the pressure is, if one can sing, the burden lightens and consolation kindles. Many a time the days were evil with David; but his harp and his songs sustained and cheered him, the same as they drove the shadows from the heart of Saul, and have helped and blessed the Church, in life and death, in all ages since. Even Jesus, in His great griefs, refreshed Himself from the this self-same fountain. Those holy Psalms have now been travelling up and down the world for full two thousand years, singing their heavenly melody to millions upon millions, and every one who has ever taken them into his heart has not failed to find in them a celestial charm to make him forget whatever sorrow he had.

Who is there among us that has not more than once listened, read, or sung himself glad with some beautiful song of Zion! Who that has never felt the song-power of devotion and spiritual melody to build up the soul under adversities! Holy song sustained martyrs on their way to the stake, and strengthened their souls amid the crackling of consuming fires. Holy songs have won victories, decided battles, and brought deliverance when hope was gone. Holy song was Luther's chief consolation, and one of the instruments in his hands which accomplished the glorious Reformation. Holy song is one of the most delightful characteristics of our worship, and the Church numbers her hymns and chorals among her highest treasures. She has fought her way with songs, and fills her temples with them, accounting that those are evil times for the truth and the souls of men when the voice of holy song is low, and the house of the Lord resounds not with the sweet carollings of earnest worshippers. *Sing*, therefore, SING is the word for evil times. *Sing* in the sanctuary, in the home, in solitude, and at every resting-place along the way of busy life. Sing with the lips; sing with the heart; sing with the spirit; sing with the understanding. Sing psalms; sing hymns; sing spiritual songs, and ever sing, making melody in your heart to the Lord.

VI. IN EVIL TIMES GIVE THANKS.

The way of the world is not according to this, nor yet the suggestions of the human heart. When adversity was heaviest upon Job, his wife advised him to "*curse God and die.*" Nor is there ever one with whom it goes ill, who has not some Job's wife about him, or in his own depraved heart, to tempt him in this very line of sin. When disasters come, and one stay and comfort after another is swept away, it seems like mockery to ask a man to give thanks. He is ready to resent such a request as an unpardonable trifling with his sufferings. Give thanks for being made a beggar, a cripple, a friendless outcast, a mere wreck upon the shores of life, with no prospect but to rot and waste between the breakers and foul weather! Absurdity! What

Digitized by Google

is there to give thanks for? Yes; even then the word is: "GIVE THANKS." For what? "FOR ALL THINGS." Give thanks for what others have, should it be so that thou hast absolutely nothing. Give thanks that it is in thy power to do something that God asks thee to do. Give thanks for the good thou hadst before the evil time came, and which in thy prosperity thou didst not half appreciate. Give thanks for the good thou still hast, even with thy adversities. Give thanks for those adversities themselves, for they are from thy God, and belong to His gracious discipline to bring thee to the higher blessedness.

VII. SERVE AND YIELD TO ONE ANOTHER IN EVIL TIMES.

"Each man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost," is the philosophy and the morality of this world, when things go ill. Evil days are apt to be days of repeal of the ten commandments, and the signal for the casting off of the fear of God and all the common restraints of decorum and social order. Then each one is ready to set to work with devilish will to secure himself in the general scramble, no matter who is hurt or what law is broken. The maxim is, "Necessity knows no law;" and evil times are sure to set people practising upon it. Hearts, else considerate and tender, become harsh as the scales of Leviathan, and the spirit of hell seems to take possession of them. No matter who suffers, what ties are riven, what rights are trampled on, what mischief is done, what treasures are trailed in the dust, or what works and fruits of ages of wisdom and prayer are destroyed, it is all the same to them just so their own points are gained, and their lusts are gratified. But such is not the way to master evil times, or to conduct one's self in them. *No*, saith the word of God; and No, re-echoes the day of trouble itself. When the thunders of the Almighty are rolling over a house, it is the signal for the voice of strife between its inhabitants to cease, and for them to hush their quarrelling into reverent silence before the majesty of God. And when the Divine judgments are flashing among the nations, and shaking the very earth, it is time for men's disgraceful and uncharitable bickerings to cease, for their unrighteousness to desist its foul work, for their hostile separations to be laid aside, and for people to remember that others have rights, and feelings, and interests to be cared for as well as themselves, and to go together in their efforts for the common good.

How this counsel applies to the several states and relations of mankind, is explained in detail in the after parts of this chapter, but the spirit and import of it is, for each one to consider his place and sphere, for each one to keep to his place and sphere, and for each one in his place and sphere to live up to the royal law of charity, in holy fear of that God who hath ordained it, and whose anger burns to the deepest hell. As the burdens, and the trials, and the dangers multiply, and life grows heavy, and the day of this world hastens to its close, and the wheels of things in Church and State clog and fasten as if to cease their motions forever, then, above all, the call is:

Lift a little! Lift a little!
Neighbor, lend a helping hand!
See that heavy-laden brother,
Who for weakness scarce can stand!

Lift a little! Lift a little!
Effort gives one added grace.
Don't increase his ponderous burden,
By thy sullen heartlessness.

Lift a little! Lift a little!
Thou may'st yet require his aid.
Lift a little! Lift a little!
Kindness shall be well repaid.

THE COMING ONE.

SEVERAL months ago, whilst engaged in examining Bengel's Gnomon, we were intensely thrilled by discovering one of those beautiful, incidental, but strongly corroborative proofs in favor of the Millenarian doctrine. In order that those who confine themselves to our common English version may see and appreciate this testimony, a few indroductory remarks may be necessary.

By reference to Rev. 11:17, we find that

Digitized by Google

after the sounding of the seventh trumpet, when Christ is to obtain the kingdoms of this world, and the prophets and saints are to be rewarded, &c., the elders are represented as saying: "*We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come,*" &c. In Rev. 16 : 5, after the third vial is poured out, the angel of the waters says: "*Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be,*" &c. The early Church, as well as all Millenarians down to the present day, always contended that the seventh trumpet ushered in the literal personal revelation of the Lord Christ, and that under the auspices and the power of Jesus, thus come, the events announced under that trumpet would occur. A large number of scriptural passages are adduced to sustain this position. Passing by these proof texts, which the reader will find quoted by every Millenarian author, and the fact that the acts and events, which are to take place, are of such a nature as to demand a personal work of Christ for their occurrence, we suggest a testimony (alluded to by others) which is not found in our version, and was either not perceived or is entirely ignored by our popular commentators.

Bengel's Gnomon on the New Testament is a work of great authority among all scholars, and when he has clearly and positively shown in any passage that the earliest and most credible of the MSS. change our version, the learned generally acquiesce in his judgment. Indeed, nothing is gained by rejecting his criticisms, seeing that the most respectable and reliable witnesses are all on his side. Now Bengel, in his Gnomon on Revelation, utterly refuses to receive the last clause in both passages quoted above, viz., the phrases "*and art to come,*" of ch. 11 : 17, and "*and shalt be,*" of ch. 16 : 5, quoting, as imperative of such a rejection, the earliest known MSS. In this criticism, Bengel is most fully sustained by the celebrated and authoritative *Codex Sinaiaticus*, or Sinai MSS. recently discovered by Prof. Tischendorf, and given to the world by the liberality of the Russian Czar. Bengel suggests that the reason why later MSS. added these clauses, and several versions retained them, was owing to both transcribers and translators injudiciously supposing that they were necessary in order to make the entire phraseology consistent and in unison with the same phrases in the first part of the book. Whatever may have influenced these men, it affords a striking illustration of the danger of thus tampering with, and trying to improve God's own word.

What follows upon this omission? Why is the title, "*Who is to come,*" given in ch. 1 : 4, 8, and ch. 4 : 8, and omitted in ch. 11 : 17, and ch. 16 : 5? Did not the Holy Spirit, that searcheth the deep things of God, leave out this clause with design and for good reasons? Such questions are easily answered if we consider one of the cardinal points of the Millenarian system, viz., that the personal advent takes place previous to the establishment of the Millennial kingdom. Indeed, if our system is based upon the truth, then this very omission is required in order to bind it together more firmly. The finding of the Sinai MSS. in our day, to confirm Bengel's testimony, is important; for it establishes our faith more fixedly in the personal advent at the period of time designated. To present this matter intelligibly, a few particulars must be noticed.

1. The omitted portion, as found in the previous part of Revelation, attached to the entire phrase or title, is a word expressive of "*coming,*" and is usually, if not universally, translated, "*who is to come,*" or, "*He who is to come,*" or "*the coming one.*" It is translated "who or *which is to come*" in the first and fourth chapters of Revelation, and in other portions of the New Testament, to which we shall refer hereafter, "*He that cometh,*" "*He that shall come,*" &c. It is rendered by those who were hostile to Millenarianism, "*who is to come,*" as, *i. e.*, by Prof. Stuart in his translation of Revelation, for which see his commentary. It is admitted by many writers that the phrase indicates a personal presence.

2. Even those writers, who, by very learned disquisitions and abundant references to the Hebrew, Sanscrit, Greek, &c., endeavor to make the entire phrase an exact equivalent of eternal duration in a self-existent form, are

Digitized by Google

forced to make two fatal admissions to their favorite theory. Whilst we may, for argument's sake, admit the idea of self-existence and eternity to be attached to the phrase, yet far more than this is denoted by it. Therefore we are not surprised that such writers admit, (1) that the phrase in its last clause does primarily mean "*He who is to come*," and (2) when considering that the two former phrases, translated "*who is*" and "*who was*," are derived from one verb, and that the future participle of the same verb, *much more expressive* of self-existence than the one used, is rejected and an unusual form substituted, they confess that the idea "*He who is to be*" is of an inferential nature, and ground this remarkable circumlocutory way of expressing it on the conjecture that this was done to imitate the Hebrew word translated *Jehovah*. (Vide Prof. Stuart's Com. on Rev., vol. ii, p. 15.) Whilst we might cheerfully accept even of this inferential conjecture as a part of its meaning, yet we contend that the Spirit, by leaving that verb, thus twice used, which would have been so precise in its meaning if simple existence or duration was the only thing to be advanced, and taking up by preference another, not near so exact if that is all that it denotes, teaches us that something more is attached to it than this class of writers are willing to acknowledge, viz., a direct reference to and teaching of the personality of the Second Advent.

3. For the word here used, in view of its *prior use* by the same Spirit, is eminently calculated to direct the attention to a personal advent. Leaving the employment of the word in designating a literal coming or arrival of future things or events, such as "days to come, world to come, Kingdom of God to come, good or evil to come, wrath to come," &c., we find that the Spirit adopts this very word to designate the personal coming of Jesus. Thus: Heb. 10:37, "*For yet a little while and He that shall come (or the coming one) will come and will not tarry.*" But as this passage has been wrested by some to mean a providential coming at the destruction of Jerusalem, we appeal to plainer, undeniable texts. Matt. 11:3, and Luke 7:19, "*Art thou He that should come (the coming one) or do we look for another?*" John the Baptist here undoubtedly applies this same word to none other than a personal coming. And, we may observe, that he employs this word or phrase in accordance with the usage of the Jews, who, as many writers declare, were accustomed to speak of the personal advent of the Messiah under the phrase, "*He who is to come*," and to designate the Messiah, "*the coming One*," "*the One waited for*," "He that cometh." In view of this Jewish usage, our argument would be strengthened by asking and answering the question, whether this phraseology was adopted by the Spirit merely to accommodate itself to the prejudices of the Jews without intending a literal fulfilment of such a personal advent as they anticipated? Leaving the question for the reader to decide for himself, we refer him to Matt. 21:9, where the *multitude* cried out, saying, "*Blessed is He that cometh (the coming one) in the name of the Lord;*" and also to Matt. 23:39, Luke 13:35, where the same form occurs with a direct reference to a future coming. We might also appropriately show how Christ Himself understood this coming, when He promised to some of His disciples that they should see the coming One in His kingdom before they tasted of death (Matt. 16:28; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:28); and how, a few days after, He verified this promise by a personal transfiguration before them in the mountain. But we deem these references amply sufficient to show that when the blessed Spirit gives this phraseology to John respecting the coming One, He evidently gives it, not to contradict or obscure its previous use of the word, but to strengthen and establish that very meaning. If this was not the design of the Spirit, how comes it that He so carefully selects, in an unusual manner, the identical word that the multitude of Jews employed to portray a personal, literal coming? Why is it, that if no reference is made to such a personal coming, but only to future continued eternal existence, that instead of saying, in unison with the preceding clauses, "*who is to be*," or "*who shall be*," the expression is "*who is to come?*"

Digitized by Google

Having thus glanced at the entire clause, as contained in the first chapters of Revelation, and shown that it includes far more than an allusion to the eternal self-existence of the Lord, we are now prepared to return and notice the omission of the latter part of the same clause in the latter part of Revelation. Why this omission? If the entire title is to be understood in the manner some declare, viz., as a periphrastic designation of the word *Jehovah*, in the sense alluded to, then we can safely challenge such writers to assign a single reason why such an omission should take place. According to their own explanation such a failure to insert the entire title or clause, is a *mutilation* of said title, and hence, as we have seen, some men, under this impression, have proceeded to rectify the passage and give it, in their own estimation, a proper consistency. We are not driven to this mode of procedure, but cordially, *joyfully* accept of this omission as a confirmation of "the blessed hope" that we are permitted to entertain. The reason why the Spirit does not insert the word translated "*who is to come*" in the chapters mentioned, was long ago given by Ansbert, as quoted by Bengel, who says: "*They do not here subjoin, as they were accustomed, 'and who art to come;' they speak of Him as already present.*" Bengel also refers to Haymo, Purvey's Com. in Pref. of Luther and Zeltner, as entertaining similar views, which he also indorses.

What an amazing corroboration is not this of our faith in that Pre-Millennium Personal Advent! This leaving out of the latter part of the clause is not accidental, as the united testimony of the weightiest MSS. proves, but is intentional, and is the very omittal required if our system is a correct exposition of the truth. We insist that Christ comes personally to inaugurate the millennial glory, and in full agreement with this, in the passage delineating the time when this is to be done, we do not read of Christ as "*He who is to come;*" that is dropped, because not in correspondence with the then existing facts.

Should any one propose that this coming is only a spiritual or providential one, let him pause and reflect how inconsistent such a view is to explain this omission. If it were indeed such a coming, what necessity would exist, or what possible design could be effected, by leaving out so important a phrase? For, if such a coming were intended, then the claim would be absolutely necessary to give due expression or force to such a presence of Christ, seeing that He has been spiritually present before the time when this omittal becomes significant; and after that period, in the millennial age, he will thus be present to the nations under His rule. Are we to understand that just at that juncture His spiritual presence will be entirely withdrawn from the Church? Is this withdrawal the reason why the elders give thanks? The only safe and just conclusion at which we can arrive, is to omit what is so abundantly taught in other places, a personal Pre-Millennial Advent, and then this omission contains a significancy that is overpowering, sublime. It tells us that the One previously declared to come, *has then arrived*, that He is then present in His own person—present differently from any other vouchsafed from the giving of the Apocalypse down to the seventh trumpet.

In conclusion, it may be added that the criticism of Bengel is fully sustained by Anti-Millenarians, such as Prof. Stuart, who, in his translation, admits the authority of the more ancient MSS., and hence also omits the last phrase. The relation that all this sustains to the interpretation of the Apocalypse as a whole, and to Rev. 16:15 specially, will be apparent to those who believe in a concealed and open manifestation, or to several repeated private and public exhibitions and acts of Christ under the general term of the Second Advent.

Finally, since Jesus in His last words uses the identical verb, so significantly omitted as already stated, in warning us, "*Surely* I COME *quickly*," let us, like John, respond with the same verb, "*Even so*, COME, *Lord Jesus.*" *O thou Coming One, come,* "*the second time, without sin unto salvation.*"

G. N. H. P.

Digitized by Google

VENGEANCE AND REWARD.

The thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah opens with a prediction respecting the future restitution of all things; a theme upon which the inspired writers often dwell, and which thrills the bosoms of God's people with the brightest hopes, which, like gleams of sunshine in a cloudy day, break through the gloom of sin and death, and foretell the final triumph of light over darkness, of good over evil, of Christ over Satan. In vision the prophet beholds the dawn of that day when God's word shall be fulfilled in the establishment and prosperity of Israel under the reign of Christ and His saints, and he cries out, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God."

With such sweet promises God was wont to comfort His people in their sore travail and prevent their sinking in despair. Still the delay of fulfilment is supposed to have a discouraging effect as age after age rolls on, and the taunt of the wicked is heard, saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." And because iniquities abound the love of many waxes cold; and a few only hold on with trembling to the hope of His coming. To these the words of encouragement are addressed: "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, fear not; behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense, He will come and save you.'"

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is called the God of Israel, according to the national covenant made with them in the wilderness, and with all their generations, until the consummation of their trial at the time of His first advent. And He is the God of all who believe on Him and obey Him according to the covenant of grace, first enunciated at the fall of man, and subsequently established with Abraham. In both covenants His incarnation was contemplated. This is the great mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. When Christ came in the flesh, He came as a root out of a dry ground. The form and comeliness of earthly rank and power were not seen in Him. He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant. He was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

The death of Christ effected two things: it annulled the national covenant made with Israel, and so extinguished all hope of justification by the deeds of the law; and it ratified the covenant of grace, and laid the foundation for pardon of sin and justification by faith to all believers. So that the inheritance of the world to come is not by the law; but by faith. For if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.

And as it was necessary for the redemption of the seed of faith that Christ should first suffer and after that enter into His glory and reign, so it was arranged in the wisdom of God that He should come into the world twice; the first time in a condition of humiliation, and the second time in a condition of glory. Hence the predictions respecting His coming relate to both conditions, which the skilful in Scripture exegesis will know how to classify. The advent of humiliation and suffering is past. He came; He suffered; He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven; He sat down at the right hand of God; from whence He will come again to glorify His elect, and subdue all things to His government. The advent of glory is yet future.

While on earth, during His condition of humiliation, He distinctly announced His second coming in power and glory. It was thus He encouraged and comforted His disciples; it was thus He admonished and warned His enemies. To the former He promised a partici-

Digitized by Google

pation in His glory, and thrones, and crowns in His kingdom; to the latter He depicted tribulation and anguish in being excluded from His presence and banished from the glory of His reign. And upon His ascension into heaven from Mt. Olivet, two angels appeared to His disciples and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus whom ye have seen go up into heaven, shall so come again in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." No wonder that they went forth and exhorted men to turn to God from idols, to serve the living God, and to wait for His Son from heaven. No wonder that the Church for two centuries held on, amidst persecution and distress, to the blessed hope of the second coming of Christ.

But when, under the reign of Constantine, the Church was delivered from persecution and wedded to the secular power, and prelates rolled in wealth and honor, they fondly dreamed that the age of restitution had come—that the millennium of blessedness had begun, and, by a pernicious method of spiritualizing the word of God, robbed themselves and others of the glorious hope. And to the present the Church generally, by the same method, has been fettered to a false philosophy which turns the word of God to fables, teaching the conversion of the world, and a millennium without Christ's personal coming.

On the contrary, the Scriptures, in their natural and obvious sense, teach us that the second personal coming of Christ is the only measure adequate to the destruction of evil, and the establishment of the age of blessedness and peace; and for this end Christ will come with vengeance and reward.

He will come with *vengeance*. This is one reason why His saints must not avenge themselves. Vengeance belongs to Him and He will repay. Hence we are admonished to be patient in the endurance of persecution until the coming of the Lord. The crimes of successive generations reach their height in the last one, and although each shall be punished according to its desert, yet so condign is the punishment of the last, that the sins of all seem to be punished in it. So it was in the antediluvian age. Wickedness had reached its culmination when the deluge came and swept off the ungodly. So it was when Sodom and Gomorrah were overthrown, for their crimes were piled up to heaven. So it was with Jerusalem, when, having filled up the measure of their fathers' sins, all the blood of the righteous men which had been shed from the martyrdom of Abel till then, was required of that generation. And so it shall be when Christ comes again, when He comes with vengeance. The accumulated sins of ages will be concentrated in the abounding iniquity of the last times, and transgressions will have come to the full. Then the world will be ripe for punishment, and vengeance will be taken upon it. "For behold the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and no more cover her slain." (Isa. 26:21.) "For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and His fury upon all their armies; He hath utterly destroyed them; He hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink also shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood, and all the hosts of heaven shall be dissolved; and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their hosts shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from a fig-tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven. Behold it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse to judgment. For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion." (Isa. 34: 1–5, 8.) Again, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there were none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the

Digitized by Google

year of my redeemed is come." (Isa. 63: 1–4.) And again, "For behold the Lord will come with fire, and with His chariots like a whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire, for by fire and by sword will the Lord plead with all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many." (Isa. 66: 15, 16.) Numerous other passages of the same import might be culled from the Old Testament, but these must suffice. What says the New? "Seeing that it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. 1: 6–8.) See also the sublime visions of John, in Rev. 6: 12–17 and 19: 11–21. "Truly He will come with vengeance, and by His righteous judgments will destroy them that destroy the earth."

He will also come with a *reward*, "even God with a recompense." The punishment of the wicked is sometimes spoken of as a recompense, but it is the reward of the righteous which is comprehended under that term by the prophet—the same to which Moses had respect and of which Paul speaks, saying, "Cast not away, therefore, your confidence which hath great recompense of reward," Heb. 10: 35, and which will be given to the faithful at the second coming of Christ.

Many persons speak of death as the time of this reward. The introduction of Platonism into theology in the third century, generated this doctrine, and it has become a prevalent idea that at death the good receive their everlasting reward, and the wicked their everlasting punishment. But the Scriptures invariably represent the second coming of Christ as the time in which the righteous shall be rewarded. Thus Jesus said, "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind, for they cannot recompense thee, but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." And the resurrection of the just will take place at the coming of Christ; "for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air." And Paul speaks of a crown of righteousness which the Lord shall give him in that day, and not to him only, but to all who love His appearing. Paul did not expect to obtain his reward at death, but at the appearing of Christ. And Jesus says, "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according to his work." "Then shall He give reward unto His servants and to all that fear His name, both small and great."

It will be a glorious reward, comprising complete and everlasting redemption from all evil, and the highest condition of glory and blessedness which can be bestowed upon any of God's intelligent creatures. For the saints of God shall be made like Christ in His moral image, and confirmed in holiness before God at the coming of Christ. And their bodies shall be made like unto His glorious body, and their understanding will be qualified to know even as they are known. They will be made one with Christ, and one with God forever. Then salvation will be consummated, and the saints of God shall possess the kingdom.

Every duty enjoined in the word of God is enforced by the doctrine of Christ's coming. It is one of the strongest motives to the practice of self-denial, patience, moderation, sobriety, watchfulness, heavenly-mindedness, obedience, and love to God and man. Looking for the coming of Christ weans the heart from sinful pleasures and worldly riches and honors. Our affections are sanctified and fixed on heavenly things, and we live by faith in the Son of God. Faith in His coming and looking for the recompense He has promised, gives strength to the weak hands, and makes us ready unto every good work. It confirms the feeble knees and inspires us with courage in the heavenly race. By this faith we overcome the world. For to believe that Jesus is the Christ is to believe also all things which are written in the Scriptures concerning Him.

It is to believe not only in His first advent, but in His second advent also; not only in His

Digitized by Google

sacrificial death, but in His glorious reign. And so it makes us willing and ready to take up the cross and follow Him in His condition of humiliation and suffering, that we may be glorified together with Him in His future exaltation and joy. ***

"DELIVER US FROM EVIL."

Matthew 6 : 13.

What evil is, has been the subject of inquiry and debate in every age. That it is not an independent and eternal principle of antagonism to God, is now generally agreed, and maintained by all orthodox theology. Nor is it mere unripe or immature good, which only needs further time and development to become a joy and blessing; if it were, it would hardly be made a subject of prayer to be delivered from it, as we would most need only patience to wait for its maturity. That there are many things apparently evil, which are ultimately to work themselves out in blessings, we all know; but it is not by reason of the good qualities latent in them, but because of that overruling Providence of God by which he maketh even the wrath of man to praise him. It is, perhaps, not so much a principle as a privation, a spoliation, a disorder. It is not a generator, or a generation, but a degeneration and a hindrance to the proper well-being of things. It is a want, an absence, a mutilation, a bereavement, a distressing deformity.

Nor is it of one kind, although all proceeding from the same root. There is *physical* evil, and *metaphysical* evil, and *moral* evil. Physical evil consists of pain, disorder, damage, and destruction in the body, and in the physical world with which it is connected. Metaphysical evil is the privation or defect of intellectual powers and capacities, and the consequent want of the higher enjoyment which might have flowed from the full and perfect possession of them. Moral evil, which, after all, is the true life and source of all real evil, is want of conformity to the moral excellence of God, or whatever is contrary to the will of God, including the whole mass of creature wrong-doing and sin, whether towards God or a fellow-being, whether cleaving to the nature or acted out in overt transgression. The world everywhere is full of all these sorts of ill. Wherever we look, without us or within us, we behold disorder, error, conflict, misery, and wrong, mingled with tormenting fears and disturbing apprehensions. And everything of this sort which the universe contains, comes under the general description of evil.

Another great question touching this subject, relates to the origin of evil, and how it came to have place in the world. Some have thought our sufferings here, the punishments and expiations of delinquencies incurred in a previous life. But, besides being unphilosophic and super-scriptural, this only carries the question a remove further back, where it recurs again, beset with equal difficulties. Others have considered it an eternal thing, like an anti-God, the independent author of all mischief, the same as God is the author of all good and blessing. But this involves such a limitation of all the attributes of God, that we cannot for a moment entertain it. It would be easier and more satisfactory to take the doctrine of the optimists at once, that evil is part of a divine system conducted by Almighty power, directed by infinite wisdom and goodness, leaving its precise origin and uses in mystery. A few propositions embrace about all that we can, with certainty, know on the subject.

First, evil is not from God, at least not as the efficient cause of it. "For God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man." The privative nature of evil also teaches us this; for we cannot conceive of a God of goodness ordaining damage and mutilation to his own works without some reason originating outside of himself. His attributes too, preclude the idea of His being the author of it. How could He originate that which His holiness abhors, which His truth contradicts, which His wisdom repudiates, and which would mingle malignity with His goodness, and exalt destruction over against His power!

Second, liability to sin is inseparable from moral government, or from such a constitution as that under which rational creatures have been made. To make a being who is to become the subject of praise or blame, reward or

Digitized by Google

punishment, there must be capacity to act so as to merit the one, or deserve the other, and consequently a capacity for defection. The very exaltation of the nature God has given, in constituting moral beings, carries in its essence the power to do wrong as well as right; so that we may say it was impossible, even for God, to enter upon such creations without, at the same time, letting open the door at which evil might enter.

Third, the creature will, by its own free choice, has moved contrary to right and goodness, and so introduced sin and evil, which God, for reasons satisfactory, has not interfered to prevent, but has allowed to be and to work, with a view to overrule it for the greater good and blessing in the end. This much we know, and to this we must hold, not allowing ourselves to be jostled from these fundamental positions by the reasonings, theorizings, or skeptical cavils of men. It is a mysterious and awful subject, and we must not trust ourselves upon it too confidently. Revelation seems purposely to have left many points in obscurity and darkness, as either beyond our comprehension, or unfitted for our knowledge; and there we must consent to let it rest. That God might have prevented it, especially from being introduced into our world, there can be no doubt. He has, however, seen fit to permit it, though He did not originate it. He has also declared His purpose not to allow it permanently to harm any of those who employ themselves properly with regard to it, but to make it an instrument of their eternal exaltation, and His everlasting praise. Our main business with it is, not to speculate and theorize with reference to its nature and origin, but to combat it, and to concern ourselves to be delivered from it.

Fourth, it is the purpose of God to give, and our privilege to attain a final and everlasting deliverance from it. Christ has not commanded us to pray for what it is not in God's purpose to bestow. As He has directed us to pray for deliverance from evil, so it is God's will and purpose to bring about such a deliverance. It may riot for a time, and press its work of spoliation and ruin; but its days are numbered, and its power shall one day be no more upon earth than if it had never touched its inhabitants, or trod upon its soil. Of this, the Scriptures are very full. All the holy prophets, from the first incoming of sin and its consequences, have been prophesying of a time when the tempter's head shall be crushed; when the curse shall be lifted off of the world; when the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea; when every enemy, including death itself, shall be destroyed; when righteousness shall dwell in the earth, and there shall be nothing more to hurt or destroy. Even "the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God," and "the whole creation" released from the pains in which it has groaned and travailed until now. The same has been a deep-rooted belief in all ages, among Gentiles as well as Jews, Heathen as well as Christians. Philosophers have written about it. Poets have sung of it. The most devout and thoughtful of men have confidently expected it. Nor shall we be disappointed in confidently believing it. Nay, it has already commenced, and the processes by which it is to be effected have already been instituted, and all the great foundations for it have been fully laid. It is included in the appointment of a Saviour, whose incarnation, teachings, institutes, death, burial, resurrection, and enthronement over all power in heaven and on earth, are all preparatives for it. The whole economy of grace, with its successive dispensations, has reference to it. It underlies all the mysterious dealings of Providence for the last six thousand years. Our present forgiveness, and awakening to spiritual life by the Spirit of God, are the first stages of it. And as certainly as the Almighty never begins without completing, so surely may we calculate that where sin now abounds, grace, with its implied redemption, will much more abound, and that evil shall be effectually expunged from the earth and supplanted with eternal righteousness and blessing.

Looking at the vastness, universality, and depth of the damages which evil has wrought in the world, and at the firm hold which it has on everything earthly, and at the length of time in which it has maintained its sway

Digitized by Google

against all assailants and resistance, and at the increased power which it has gained with every succeeding age and generation, we would hardly think it possible that deliverance from it should ever come. Evil is upon everything. It has penetrated every recess. It is upon man and beast. It has affected the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink, the earth on which we tread, and all the relations, and necessities, and operations of human life. "The burden of it," says an eloquent preacher, "is heard in the voice of the new-born babe, sending back the first draught of air which its tiny lungs have made, and is found in the death-rattle of the gray-headed grandsire, breathing out his last, after a life of toils and woes. Each contest that sets man against his fellows, from wars like those of Tamerlane or Napoleon, that littered a continent with their millions of dead, down to the street-fray, or the village lawsuit; each statute, tribunal, and prison, and penalty; each party-gathering and each party-badge; each form, and voice, and look of human anguish; the pauper's thin and trembling hand; the maniac's shriek, and the captive's asking eye; the sick man's hollow cheek; all the diseases that crowd the beds of the hospital, and perplex the physician's skill, and crowd the volumes of a medical library; all the remedies and diversions that seek to while away care, or to suppress thought; the drunkard's bowl, and the song of the reveller, and the gambler's dice-box; all the wild utterances of human revenge and hate; murder scowling on the brother whose presence it cannot abide, and jealousy and envy nibbling at character, and hinting dislike; all the ills of childhood, maturity, and age; each bead of sweat rolling from the brow of honest toil; each tear that falls from the eye, and each sigh that quits the burdened heart; every pang felt, and every complaint uttered, but waft to God, or send around to our fellow-man, the one sad, monotonous cry" over the evil that is upon the entire race. "Each age, each condition, each change, has its ineffectual protests and complaints that falter out some broken syllables of the world's evils, its wrongs, and its sorrows. Human government is a protest against the evil of anarchy; and revolution is a protest against tyrannical government. Industry is a protest against the evil of famine and want; and amusement witnesses against the fatigues of exhausting and unremitting industry. The novel, and the opera, and the day-dream, are a protest against the insipidity and drudgery of every-day life; and suicide—what is it but a rash and violent protest against the intolerable burden of earth and self? * * * The discontent of the poor, and the restless satiety of the rich; fretfulness, and fatigue, and sickness, and pain, and poverty, and disgrace—what are they all but placards, bidding him that runs to read the universal pressure of sorrow and disappointment? * * * And not man alone, but the lower orders of being as well, take their part in the great concert of lament, and swell before their Maker the cry of the martyred saints beneath the altar, as they witness against the triumphs of evil, and exclaim before the just Judge, '*O Lord, how long!*'" And with the wickedness and apostasy of man, a blot has come even upon the inanimate creation, and inspired the elements with the spirit of disorder, filling the very ground with a rebellion that yields briers and thorns more readily than good, and refuses to give us bread until it is torn with instruments of iron, and mixed with tears, and sweat, and blood. The world, with all its inhabitants, is a captive, an invalid, a ruin, which hardly knows any other god than the Destroyer, or any other estate than mutilation and wretchedness. We look on and wonder how health is to be restored to such fevered pulses, or peace and purity displace such giant disorders and corruptions, or salvation come to what has been so thoroughly spoiled, depraved, and lost. And if we had no hope but that which connects with mere human effort and progress, we might well despair of ever seeing the world redeemed.

But the Saviour directs us to a great Father in the heavens, who has the power to accomplish it, who is willing to be entreated on the subject, and who has covenanted to effect it. Is the soul guilty and condemned? As it looks to Him through Christ, it is pardoned and absolved, and the entries of its sins upon the

Digitized by Google

books of heaven are blotted out, and there is no more condemnation. Is the justified one still beset with weaknesses, errors, infirmities, and lingering corruptions? As it joins itself to Jesus, and looks with prayerful faith to the Divine hand to uphold it in its trials, and is fully set not to consent with flesh and blood, there shall be strength and light imparted, and a gradual purgation effected, by which it shall at last stand without fault before the very throne of God. Does it still dwell in a weak, cumbrous, and decaying body? Even the dust that it wears shall presently be transfigured into the likeness of that humanity which now sits in heavenly glory upon the seat of universal power; "for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." And whatever defect there may be of body, soul, or spirit, or whatever evil may connect with the estate in this life, of those who have been joined to the Father through Christ, the time is at hand when it shall disappear forever. These intellects, so dull, and clogged, and cloudy now, shall presently be disenthralled, illumined by the light of God, filled with the intuitions of angels, and set free in all the glorious domain of eternal wisdom, truth, and beauty. These hearts, oft sad now by reason of their infirmities and failures, their unstable affections and still adhering sins, shall presently be thrilled with the sense of a finished cleansing, and be glad before God with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And these bodies, though fretted with aches and ailments, and wasted with disease even to the putrescence of the grave, shall start up like new-born angels into a form of being which hunger, and thirst, and pain, and weariness, and waste can touch no more forever. Even our associations, which now often do but hinder, weigh upon, and vex us, shall be exchanged for the society of just men made perfect, and companionship with the loving, wise, and good of all ages, and of all worlds.

But the promised deliverance extends much further than this. It not only reaches the saint, and his everlasting extrication from all the entanglements and every taint of evil, but it takes in also the world in which he lives, and the lifting off from all this sublunary sphere whatever depressions or ills sin has brought into it. Luther says, "It is to be hoped that not man only, but the earth and heaven, shall again be brought back to their Edenic state." This earth was never made for annihilation, nor its lower orders to sigh and suffer perpetually. But "as the world, for the sin of man, lost its first dignity, and was cursed after the fall, and the beauty bestowed upon it by the creation defaced, so shall it recover that ancient glory, when he shall be fully restored by the resurrection to that dignity he lost by his first sin. As man shall be freed from his corruptibility, to receive that glory which is prepared for him, so shall the creatures be freed from that imperfection, and those stains and spots on the face of them, to receive a new glory suited to their nature, and answerable to the design of God, when the glorious liberty of the saints shall be accomplished." This battle-field of good and evil shall yet rise up out of all its desolations. The bliss of Paradise shall yet dwell in its valleys, and the glory of God shine on its hills. Though a lazar-house for so many ages, it shall be the home of righteousness and peace, and a temple of blessing and glory, whose vaulted dome shall echo forever with redemption's songs. Things may look unpromising now, but matters are making ready for the grand revival. Tyranny, and war, and wickedness, and distress may seem to have taken possession of the world; but their end is near, and the golden era is presently to begin. Satan and his emissaries may struggle and vaunt, but they have but a short time, and shall never be able to prevent the glorious resurrection that is about to pass upon the world. The sore travail of the Saviour's soul shall yet be seen to his everlasting satisfaction. Jesus himself shall set up his throne over all this spoiled and revolted province, and brighten it with the glories of His ineffable personal presence. The holy ministries of the children of the resurrection, shall cover it with a mantle of peace and light. Every plant, which the heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted out. All its long-erring nations shall be reclaimed, and all its discordant elements recovered to harmony

Digitized by Google

and rest. Over all this place of graves and blood, the flowers of immortality shall bloom. Instead of the coffin, shall be Elijah's chariot, and in place of the death-struggle shall be Enoch's rapture. And from all God's great universe shall break forth the song of joy and praise over a world that was lost but is found. Blessed, blessed consummation of this poor down-trodden world!

For what, then, would the Saviour have us pray in this petition, but for this very consummation? For what does he direct us to entreat, but that the power of Satan may be broken, his dominion destroyed, and the church, and the earth which has been promised to the saints, released and purged from all the ills which his subtlety and malice have originated? It is a prayer that error may cease, and wickedness be brought to a perpetual end, and suffering lifted off of the innocent creation, our souls freed from their ignorance and guilt, our time of trial and exposure hastened to its conclusion, our holy dead recovered from their graves, and these corrupt bodies transfigured into the same glory which the Saviour wears. It is a prayer that the afflictions of the poor, and the sufferings of the sick, and the yokes of the oppressed, and the burdens of the wronged, and the triumphs of the wicked, and the reign of inequality and injustice, and all the ten thousand disorders of the world and its inhabitants may be interrupted, and broken, and forever shut out from the earth which Christ has purchased with His blood. It is a prayer that the great redemptive processes may be sustained and hastened in our souls, and in the world at large, and in all that concerns them; that the curse which came in by Adam's fall, may in due time be repealed, and all traces of it effectually expunged. It is a prayer for sanctification, for peace, for victory over death, for release from privation, for the exaltations and liberties of heaven, and for the day when creation's groans shall be heard no more. It is a prayer not for ourselves alone, but for the whole brotherhood of worshippers, and for the whole system of things with which they are connected. In a word, it is a final summing up of all prayer which contemplates our redemption completed and all the gracious purposes of God eternally consummated. And this prayer the Saviour puts into the lips of all his followers, directing them to bow their knees before the Eternal Father, and to plead in his name: "DELIVER US FROM EVIL."

"THE PROPHETIC KEY."

THIS is the title of a pamphlet of 48 pages, which is marked as the first number of a monthly serial, commenced and to be continued by P. S. G. Watson and A. F. Baker, Versailles, Ky. The price is $2.50 per year, in advance. It is to be "devoted exclusively to the exposition of the Prophetic Scriptures." The "Salutatory" has the following statement as to the belief entertained by the publishers, and to be set forth in the "Key."

"Prominent among the views to be advocated will be the personality of the *Antichrist;* that he is not a succession of men nor a set of principles, but that he is, or will be, a man, an individual man, whose advent must antedate that of Christ; that *the abomination of desolation* spoken of by Daniel the prophet, spoken of by Christ, and all the accompanying wonders; the great apostasy; "the great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be;" the darkening of the sun and the moon; the falling of the stars from heaven; the shaking of the powers of the heavens; men's hearts failing for fear, because of the things coming upon the earth; the opening of the seven seals; the sounding of the seven trumpets, and the pouring out of the seven vials of God's wrath, are all in the future and are yet to be fulfilled; the premillennial advent of Christ; the resurrection of the righteous dead; and the change of the righteous living to immortality at his coming.

"We do not intend to engage in any wild, extravagant, or speculative expositions; nor do we intend to prophesy or make any effort to become wise above that which is written, but make an earnest, humble, and prayerful effort to interpret that which was written of old time for our instruction and our edification."

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VIII. AUGUST, 1870. No. 8.

Special Contributions.

JOSHUA A TYPE OF CHRIST.

THE typical character of the Old Testament, is understood by Christians, and the beauty and power of this form of teaching felt and appreciated by them; but the full extent of this typical revelation is perhaps not as yet seen.

What more satisfactory proof of the divine origin of the Scriptures can be found than the wonderful agreement of its various parts? The historic scenes of the Old Testatment, and the symbols of the New, elucidating each other! May we study God's Word with such care and diligence, that all its contents may become to us vivid realities, and its "shadows of good things to come," no longer hidden treasures!

An investigation of the Old Testament, to elucidate the New, may manifest that in the wonderful story of the past, is pictured the still more wonderful future. Each event recorded in the Old Testament resembling a germ, in which lies folded—as the oak in the acorn—some of the glorious purposes of God yet to be developed.

In this article, but one event in the life of Joshua will be noticed. For this see Joshua 8:30-35.

In every mention made in the Old Testament of the national covenant, into which God entered with Israel, from its first ratification at the foot of Sinai, until its renewal previous to the death of Joshua, the *elders of Israel*, are spoken of as forming the chief *representatives of the nation* on each occasion, and in each instance; there is also special mention made of "*a Book*," a book, in which was recorded the terms of the covenant, and also of a *mediator*—Moses first, then Joshua—both prominent types of the One Mediator, Christ. See Deut. 29:1-27, 31:9-13, 24-30; Josh. 8:30-35, 23:1-6, 24:1, 25, 26; and, in Deut. 30:1-10, we find a promise of the new covenant, of a return of the nation after and on condition of repentance, into the bonds of the covenant. As the terms of the national covenant which God formed with Israel, were recorded in a book—the word *book* is often used in the Bible, as synonymous with *covenant*.

The prayer of Moses, Exod. 32:32, is comprehensible, if by *book*, we allow that he means the *national covenant*. Moses, for the sake of his people might be willing to renounce an earthly portion for himself and his descendants, as an earthly inheritance, and an earthly glory are promised in that covenant. These he might lose and his eternal happiness still be secure. There are many other instances in the Bible, in which the word "book," has reference to a *covenant*, and so to understand it, will make more plain the meaning of the context.

The first mention of the "book," spoken of in Josh. 8:34, is to be found in Exod. 24:7, where it is called, "the book of the covenant;" the covenant that was formed between God and the children of Israel, at the foot of Mount Sinai, Moses acting as mediator. In this covenant, God promised that they should be His people on condition of obedience, and the people promised to render that obedience. (Exod. 19:3-8.) The promise of the land of Canaan.

Digitized by Google

as their inheritance—previously made to Abraham, Gen. 13: 14–17—was at the same time renewed, see Exod. 23: 20–31, and the covenant ratified by sprinkling the blood of burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings, on the altar, on the people, and on the book—see Heb. 9: 19, 20—and this blood was called "the blood of the covenant."

The book contained the terms of the covenant, for in it "Moses wrote all the words of the Lord," and *he took the book* of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people, who said, "all that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient." "The book of the covenant," into which God entered with Israel, was also an evidence of the transfer of the land of Canaan to that people. We learn from Jer. 32: 9–15, that all evidences of the purchase and transfer of land were sealed.

In the margin, ver. 10, the evidence is called the book. In connection with all this, see Neh. 9: 38.

In Jer. 31: 32, we learn that the covenant made with Israel at the foot of Sinai, was broken, notwithstanding their many promises to the contrary! Exod. 32 contains the account of the first breach of the national covenant—how quickly defection followed the assurances of obedience!

In Jer. 31: 31–34, we read, that God promises to enter into a better covenant with His people, than that made at Sinai. This is quoted in Heb. 8: 6–13, where we read that of this new covenant, Christ is Mediator. Moses, in acting as Mediator, in the forming of the first covenant, was only serving as an example and shadow of heavenly things, as was Joshua in its renewal.

The first covenant was ratified with the blood of sacrifices, applied by Moses as mediator; the new covenant shall be, with the blood of the testator himself, at once the sacrifice and the surety. And by the terms of the new covenant its perpetuity is insured, while at the same time forgiveness is promised for the past.

The performance of the terms of the covenant, on the part of the people, being thus secured, it remains that when they are fulfilled, the promises of God to them shall be fulfilled also. These are, that they "shall be a peculiar treasure to God above all people—a kingdom of priests and a holy nation;" and that they shall inherit the land of Canaan. (Exod. 19: 5, 6, 23: 20–33; Jer. 31: 35–40.) But the terms of this covenant are not yet accomplished on either side. The Jews are not yet a holy nation obeying God from the heart: neither do they yet occupy Canaan—but prophecy assures us that all this shall be. See Ezek. 36, 37.

In Josh. 24: 31, we find that the government of the people must have remained in the hands of the elders, after the death of Joshua. In after times a similar power to that enjoyed by the elders was exercised by the priests. (Deut. 17: 8–13.)

David divided the priests (and other officers also) into twenty-four courses, and this arrangement was continued by Solomon.

We have seen that at every mention of the covenant the "elders of Israel" are spoken of as acting for the people. The number was at first seventy. This number is connected with Israel during the defection, the apostasy of the nation; see Ezek. 8: 11; Exod. 24: 1. "By mentioning precisely this number of elders, Ezekiel sets before us a representation of the whole people,—an ideal representation,—and of such a kind as to indicate the strong contrast that existed between former and present times—the original seventy being employed in immediate connection with God's glory and covenant, while these were engaged in an act which bespoke the dishonoring of God's name, and the *virtual dissolution of His covenant.*" The number *seventy* then stands connected with a *broken* covenant—the covenant entered into by the seventy elders—being soon annulled by the disobedience, the idolatry, of the people.

David acted under divine inspiration in all the changes made in the administration of his kingdom, and by him his various officers were divided into twenty-four classes or courses—thus the number *twenty-four* stands connected with Israel *revived, restored,* and *reconstructed,*—for David, and his still more glorious son Solomon, are both remarkable types of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Son and the Root of David who is to reign over the house

Digitized by Google

of Jacob forever and ever. And as under David and Solomon, the twenty-four courses of priests ruled as elders, and acted as representatives of the people, the twenty-four elders (Rev. 4:4, 10) may symbolize the Jewish nation. The number "four-and-twenty" may be selected as pointing to the period of future glory for Israel, to be brought in by the Root of David, and typified in the days of Solomon, while "the elders" recall the covenant made and broken but yet to be renewed. Thus may "the four-and-twenty elders" be considered as symbolic of that nation, which is called by God himself "a kingdom of priests," and therefore may it be that "the elders are seen clothed in white raiment and with crowns of gold on their heads." (The four beasts or living creatures, Rev. 4:6, it is allowed symbolize the Church.)

Joshua renews in Canaan, the covenant made at Sinai; he assembles the representatives of the nation around the Ark—the type of God's throne; the book of the covenant, which had been placed in the side (Deut. 31:24–30) of the Ark, is given him; he takes it—reads to the people its blessings and its curses, and the covenant is renewed, but to be again broken. In this typical scene we have a picture of what shall be, when Christ "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David," "shall take the book out of the right hand of Him that sits upon the throne" for although, "the children of Israel shall abide many days, without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, yet afterward shall they return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days," and then shall a greater than Joshua ratify with them "a covenant of peace, an everlasting covenant," and in their own land the restored and redeemed Jewish nation shall unite with the redeemed Church, in the new song of praise, to "the Lamb that was slain," through the sprinkling of whose precious blood, they shall both alike be made, "kings and priests unto God," and "shall reign on the earth."

Great and glorious things are yet to come, and it can hardly be that they have not all been foreshadowed from the beginning. E. T.

THE RESTITUTION OF LIVING MEN.

ACTS 3:21.

WE now approach the consideration of the restitution of that class of the human family, living in the body on the earth, as we are now, at the time of the Lord's return.

It may here be remarked, that this restitution will not be all wrought out at the same time. The dead will be raised and glorified, at the coming of the Son of Man to judgment; and the saints waiting for the coming of the bridegroom, will be transfigured after their resurrection; then will follow the glorious reign of which we will not speak now. When *that* glorious reign, the great theme and burden of prophetic song, as well as of the preaching of Christ and His disciples, comes to a close, then will come the completion of the restitution of all things; then will men living on the earth in the flesh, be completely redeemed from sin, the curse and death, and restored to as perfect holiness as that of Adam and Eve before the fall and made immortal; and this is the great and grand subject that now demands attention.

The term "restitution," as it occurs in the passage before us, and as applied to the human family, means the act of replacing in a former state; or restoring to the full extent that which has been forfeited or taken away. The restitution then, of the human race in the body, or in the flesh living upon the earth, as the coming of the Lord Jesus, the great Restitutor, implies, that *they* shall be restored to that condition, or state in which man originally existed, or was created,—restored to the image of God, holiness, blessedness, and life, or immortality. They shall be restored at last to that state and condition, through the atonement of Jesus and the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, in which Adam came from the hand of Trinity, and existed while in innocence and the Lord walked with Him in Paradise. To the race in the flesh as we now are, at the end of the millennium, the lost image of God shall be fully, perfectly restored. Holiness shall fill the heart, body, and soul and be the attribute of the whole man. It shall be the body and soul of every feeling and desire. It shall be the utterance of every word:—the life and power

Digitized by Google

and result of every action—their very nature their very self they shall be again, the very image of God. Consequently *discase* and *death* shall have no power over them. The bloom of immortality fresh in the glory of the Lord shall forever blossom on the cheek of restituted man on the earth. The hand of the Lord God having wiped away all tears from all eyes, perfect blessedness shall forever sparkle in them, as the clear light in the shining star. All sorrow taken from their hands, they shall forever sing the new song, which the Lord God puts into their mouths. Sin destroyed and Satan cast out,—all restored to perfect holiness —all made righteous, there shall be no more death, no more curse.

Whatever Adam was in innocence, the race shall be and more, in the restituted condition. He was flesh and blood as we ourselves are, and so will they be; he was a perfectly holy being, and so will they be perfectly holy beings; he was in the image of God, and so will they be; he was immortal, and so will they be; for if he had not sinned, he would not have died; and as they will never sin, being restored to infallible holiness, they will never die. The years of the Eternal, shall be the duration of their existence. On and on, ever youthful, young and healthful, without tasting of death, in due time they will be transfigured to glory, and pass into the glorified state, to be united with the glorified resurrection and transfigured saints.

Jehovah visited man in innocence; was his Father and friend, and held sweet communion and fellowship with him. Then there was no withdrawing on the part of the Lord God from the creature He had made in His own image; no hiding of His bliss-inspiring face from the beloved workmanship of His hands. He visited him in Eden, and walked with him in its shadowy bowers; conversed of employment pregnant with bliss, and filled his happy heart with boundless joy; there He gave him being, there He assigned him employment; there of his own bone He made him an helpmeet,—gave him lovely Eve to wife. And as it was in Eden, so shall it be according to what God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began, in the restituted creation. When the Lord Jesus Christ comes to restore our race to the paradisiacal state, He will remain and dwell with them on the earth; for then the kingdoms of this world will become His kingdom, and here He will dwell forever and ever. He will abide and associate with men upon this earth renewed: for then His tabernacle will be with them, and He will be their God. He will converse and live with them even as the bridegroom with the bride, for He has to lead them and feed them by fountains of living waters. He will bless them with His abiding presence, for He will be with them that they may behold His glory. He will walk the regenerated earth with them, as He did the bowers of Eden with Adam and Eve in the morning of holiness: associate with restituted men, as He did with holy Adam yet in His own image; and all nations restored to holiness rejoicing in His presence shall bring gifts and presents unto Him, "yea shall fall down and worship Him." All nations restituted to man's condition of holiness before the fall, shall call Him blessed: their holy and rapturous songs of thanksgiving shall envelop the earth in an atmosphere of sweet, melodious and perpetual praise to Him who sitteth king forever upon His father David's throne, and He shall be there the king of glory to receive it from their lips forever.

The generation then inhabiting the earth and perfectly restored to the image of God, will be as we have seen in a state holy as our first parents in innocence and that generation; and all succeeding generations will fulfil the command of the Lord given to Adam and Eve in innocence; which they did not fulfil because of their fall, namely, "multiply and replenish the earth." This command was given to the first pair, not after their transgression, but while in innocence, while in perfect holiness, while the image of God shone gloriously in them. From this it would appear that it was the will of God, that in this state of holiness, they should be the parents of children holy as themselves—of children born in the image of God. And had they remained in innocence, they would doubtless, according to this com-

Digitized by Google

mand, have multiplied and filled the earth with a holy progeny—children born in their own image, the image of God, and instead of dying they would have lived forever. And as holy generation after holy generation served its day without tasting of death, it would have passed into the glorified state, leaving the next generation to multiply and replenish the earth; and so on, generation after generation "unto perpetual generations," ages without end.

But man abode not in innocence, and consequently in innocence and holiness this command was not fulfilled; children were not born in innocence and holiness, they were born in guilt and sin. But in the restitution of all things, when our race in the flesh, living upon the earth, is restored to perfect holiness, to that state in which our first parents were when this command was given, it will be perfectly obeyed and fulfilled. Men will then in holiness multiply and replenish the earth, and fill it with holy children born in the image of God, such as would have been or rather superior to those that would have been born had not man sinned and fallen. All this any reflecting mind, enlightened by the teachings of Scripture, must see is necessary to complete what is implied in the term *restitution.*

This, then, brings us to the perpetual multiplying or eternal increase of the race in the restituted state. Let no man be startled at this. Let it be particularly observed, that they who multiply are not *the resurrection* nor *transfigured saints*, for *they* neither marry nor are given in marriage in the resurrection state; but the *generation* living in the body on the earth, at the time of the complete restitution, made holy and immortal, but not glorified. *These* are they who are to multiply and have children born in the image of God: and thus generation after generation will be the order of things on the renewed earth forever and ever.

The doctrine of the perpetual increase, or everlasting multiplication of the race, or generation succeeding generation to eternity upon this earth renewed, and the personal reign of Christ, may appear to some a strange doctrine, and one they may be disposed to hear with ridicule and unbelief. But the question with us is this, and simply this, Is it taught in the Bible? Have we God's authority for the doctrine? If God is clearly the author of it, and He teaches it in His word, then we are bound to receive it, no matter what may have been our previous teaching or views; no matter what may be to us the seeming difficulties in which it may be involved. And in order that this may be made manifest, we propose to present a brief summary of Bible evidence of the everlasting increase of the human race, and earnestly implore that it may be considered with candor and patience.

God's covenant with Noah teaches the everlasting increase of the race. Let us dispossess ourselves of all prejudices and look at it carefully and candidly and see if it does not. Gen. 9:12–16, "And God said, this is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature, for *perpetual generations;* I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be in the cloud. And I will remember my covenant which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud: I will look upon it, that I may remember the *everlasting* covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." Now observe that God makes this covenant with Noah and his sons, and *every living* creature on the earth, unto perpetual generations. The Hebrew word here rendered *perpetual*, as well as the translation, signifies *eternal*, and means and is used to designate *perpetual* or *eternal* generations: that is, generation succeeding generation forever.

Now this teaches as clearly and positively as anything can, that there will be not merely a succession of generations of men for a few hundreds or thousands of years; or according to the common opinion till the day of judgment or the end of the world: for this earth is not to end at the Lord's coming, not to be destroyed or annihilated at the day of judgment, but renovated for perpetual duration, and that

Digitized by Google

thereon there will be a succession of generations through eternal ages,—generation succeeding generation forever and ever. This is the meaning of the clause in the covenant, "*perpetual generation.*" This covenant is called an "everlasting covenant,"—a covenant of eternity: which clearly intimates that the blessings which it secures will be bestowed or perpetuated forever and ever, and that those for whose benefit they are secured will come into existence generation after generation, forever and ever, to receive and enjoy them.

That is beyond all controversy the clear meaning of the language of the covenant. And if it teaches, as it most clearly does, that generation of mankind has to succeed generation of mankind on the renewed earth, or restituted creation, we are bound to believe and accept that doctrine, no matter what may be the seeming difficulties in which it may be involved, or the objections that may be brought against it. But more of this hereafter. J. H.

"DEAD NATIONS NEVER RISE AGAIN."

(Longfellow's Lines on the Jewish Cemetery at Newport.)

YES, Babylon the proud is dead,
And Nineveh is of the past;
And Grecia's glory too has fled,
And Persia's greatness could not last.

And Tyre no more shall live again,
Swept by time's ocean out of sight;
And Carthage once did bloom in vain,
Her sun has set fore'er in night.

And where is Rome's great glory now,
That dazzled once all human kind?
To whom all nations low did bow,
Nor limits her vast power confined.

Gone like the dew upon the flowers,
Exhaled as evanescent mist;
Where once she swayed her mighty power,
Ignoble slaves do now exist.

Of Canaan and of Amalek
Not e'en a vestige now remain;
Swept down the tide a broken wreck,
Which ne'er shall be rebuilt again.

Yes, all are in their graves of doom
But that mysterious race of old;
Avenging wrath did them consume,
And bury in Time's ocean cold.

Thro' all its changes these live on,
Distinct as on Judea's hills;
Still looking for the promised dawn
Thro' all their night of woeful ills.

Their visions are not all in vain;
Their "great traditions of the past"
Will yet be verified again,
Their hopes be realized at last.

"Dead nations never rise again!"
And yet for this they fondly look,
Nor are their expectations vain,
As prophesies God's Holy Book.

And tho' the veil is on thine eyes
Whene'er thou readest of their fate,
Yet from the dust they soon shall rise,
In spite of haughty Gentile hate.

E'en these dry bones again shall live,
As holy seers prophetic tell;
And as their glory they receive
Shall sound the Gentile nations' knell!

M. E. S.

WHAT DO WE PREACH?

Are we preaching the whole Gospel? The multiplied hobbies and crotchets of the day prove the pertinency of the question. It is not enough to preach,—we must preach the Gospel; not in snatches and fragments, but in all its blessed fulness and saving power. Shall we preach doctrine? Yes; the doctrine of Christ, including all its parts. No single truth, however vital, is sufficient to develop a symmetrical Christian character. We must present, not only Christ crucified, but Christ risen and glorified; not only Christ the Intercessor, but Christ the coming Judge.

BICKERSTETH states, upon careful examination, that at least one verse in thirty of the New Testament points onward to the coming of Christ and the resurrection.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE.

That the Lord Jesus Christ will return in person to His own world, and find it in a state of open rebellion against His authority; that this return may be at any moment without further warning; and that it will most certainly be before the earth shall be filled with truth and righteousness; are statements so strange and startling to the majority of His disciples, that they refuse to believe them, and consider them only as fit subjects for ridicule.

Well, we can bear all these utterances with perfect equanimity, at any rate with patience, for if we are in error, most assuredly it is unconsciously and unwillingly; but supremely concerned as we are for the honor of what appears to us divine truth invested with profound solemnity, we crave arrest of judgment until we have once more given a reason of the hope that is in us. We ask no forced or fanciful interpretation—nay, the peculiarity and the glory of our doctrine is that we ask no interpretation at all—but just the acceptance of the words of Scripture in their plain, obvious, grammatical sense, such as the same words receive in the ordinary speech and writings of men. We boldly affirm that "interpretation" has darkened counsel, obscured revelation, bewildered the church, perplexed "theology," and done an enormous amount of mischief which nothing short of the advent of Jesus himself can counteract. We do not apologize for this statement, though it may seem extravagant to those who believe that we are on the high road to millennial blessedness through the diligent use of existing ecclesiastical agency; for we are as fully convinced of its truth as we are of the indisputable fact, that whatever the cause may be, counsel is darkened, revelation is obscured, the church is bewildered, and theology is perplexed. The logical character of the inference we draw from these broad premises may be very easily denied, but the premises themselves are so deplorably notorious, that it were a waste of time to call a single witness; and the doctrine that interpretation is the terrible mischief-maker may be vehemently resented, but if it were not distressingly painful—when one thinks of how it has made the Bible a riddle—it would be rarely amusing to collect the "views," and "opinions," and "thoughts," and "ideas" of the devout and excellent men who have spent many precious years in efforts to interpret the plainest book in the world. When the unhappy period arrived in the history of Christendom, at which the Bible began to be considered as speaking in a non-natural sense, the true doctrine of the Messiah's relationship to the entire human race began to be shorn of its glory, scholastic theology began to usurp the place of the holy oracles, and dismal and horrible inferences, totally repugnant to the entire genius of revelation, began to be accepted as parts of that revelation. These are facts, and though facts may be accounted for, they cannot be reasoned away, and should not be ignored.

Let us then go to the fountain head, and hear what inspired men say about the coming of the Lord. Apostolic teaching on this momentous subject should be final with the modern church, and if, while believing that the second advent precedes and introduces the long-looked for era of human blessedness we find ourselves in the glorious company of the apostles, we can well afford to be in the minority, whatever temporary unpleasantness may attach to that fact.

1. The coming of the Lord in relation to patience. Neither the prospect of death, nor that of a peaceful world, subdued by the doctrine of the cross, is set before believers as an argument for patience, but the return of the Lord is used for that purpose. "In your patience possess ye your souls. . . . And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption

Digitized by Google

draweth nigh. . . . Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." (Luke 21 : 19, 27, 28, 36.) Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, remembers gratefully their "patience of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ," and how they "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven." (1 Thess. 1 : 3, 9, 10.) Again, in his second letter to the same church he says: "We ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations which ye endure: which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven." (2 Thess. 1 : 4, 7.) These disciples endured persecutions patiently, because they looked for the return of their blessed Saviour, and the establishment of his glorious kingdom. And thus the apostle lovingly prays for them: "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." (Ch. 3 : 5.) Paul charges Timothy to "follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness," and that he "keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Tim. 6 : 11, 14.) Patience is also among the graces which Titus is charged to inculcate upon his hearers, and the glorious appearing of the Saviour is the goal on which their eye is to rest. (Tit. 2 : 2, 13.) "For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." (Heb. 10 : 36, 37.) "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient, establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." (Jas. 5 : 7, 8.) Patience is also among the graces named by Peter as qualifying for an abundant entrance into the Saviour's kingdom (2 Pet. 1 : 6, 11); and it is needless to remark, that the setting up of the kingdom is always made dependent upon the coming of the Lord. Death and heaven are the popular ideas of the coming of the Lord, and the establishment of the kingdom; but the popular ideas are not the scriptural doctrines.

2. The coming of the Lord in relation to hope. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" (1 Thess. 2 : 19.) "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess. 6 : 13, 14.) Paul tells Timothy that the "Lord Jesus Christ is our hope," that is to say, His advent, as is quite clear from His words to Titus 2 : 13. "Looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." (1 John 3 : 2, 3.) "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 1 : 13.)

3. The coming of the Lord in relation to watchfulness. "Watch, therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. . . . Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." (Matt. 24 : 42, 44. See also Matt. 25 : 13; Mark 13 : 32, 37; Luke 21 : 34, 36.)

4. The coming of the Lord in relation to Christian labor. One of the common objections to the premillennial advent is—that those who believe it are not likely to be zealous in evangelistic or missionary labors. If this ob-

Digitized by Google

jection mean merely that they do not exhibit their Christian zeal and devotedness as the result of the conviction that to the Church has been intrusted "the conversion of the world," we accept it cheerfully; but the objection, tested by the grievously misunderstood "analogy of faith," shapes itself into a powerful argument in favor of the doctrine against which it is brought forward. We have not space here to enter into this matter; enough at present if we prove from Scripture that the coming of the Lord was used by Jesus and His apostles as the great incentive to holy zeal; our opponents will find it a hard task to prove that it is not; and that which it was eighteen centuries ago it must, from the nature of the case, be at the present hour, if it be understood and realized as it was in apostolic days. The parable of the Pounds (Luke 19) is clearly in point. "Occupy till I come," is the great lesson of the dispensation under which we live. These brief words embrace every item of Christian duty, and declare the most powerful motive of Christian fidelity. Within the whole range of thought there is nothing equal to a settled expectation of the Lord's return as an impulse to consecration. Even the oft-repeated statement that our labors are to issue in the evangelization of the entire race falls immeasurably short of the advent of Jesus as an argument for diligence in the Lord's work. Why, the return of Jesus is literally everything now, for everything depends upon it. There is no putting down of rampant evil, no cleansing of the hideous abominations of the world, no filling the earth with truth and righteousness, no fulfilling of a thousand outstanding predictions, no resurrection of the saints from among the dead, no glorification of departed believers, and no public recognition of God's anointed King till then. The return of the King, who was murdered by his subjects, to take possession of his dominions, reward his friends, and punish his foes, is the one great comprehensive all-embracing thought which meets us in the pages of prophets, evangelists, and apostles. Instead of glancing faintly on the eye here and there as we look across the broad fields of revelation, it bathes those fields with celestial light and burnishes them with heavenly glory. Just listen to this—it is the word of an apostle to a preacher, both of whom were undeniably "millenarians." "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." (2 Tim. 4 : 1, 2.) No one can deny that Timothy is here urged to earnestness as a Christian minister within view of his Lord's return; and the noble Paul himself when about to go to rest, after many a well-fought field, says: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." In one word, the coming of the Lord, the return of Jesus, was the theme, and thought, and hope, and joy of the early Christians; it was, and is, emphatically APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE.

WHAT IS THE USE?

SOMETIMES the question is asked: "What good will receiving this doctrine do me? I trust in Christ; I have received the Holy Spirit; I hope for heaven; I love the Word of God, and I desire to serve God; what the better shall I be by believing that the Lord's coming will precede the Millennium, and not the Millennium come and pass away before the Lord's glorious appearing?"

1. You will become, as regards your hopes, more like the saints of apostolic times. No one can deny but that the personal coming of the Lord Jesus, and the glorious resurrection day, were the objects of their hopes, rather than death, or an expectation of the grandest triumphs of the gospel in this world.

2. You will understand the Bible better as a whole, and become more deeply interested in many parts which some Christians seldom read.

3. You will learn to take right views of the present dispensation. I can only mention three

Digitized by Google

points: That it is elective, and not universal; that it is spiritual, and not national; that it will end in apostasy, and not glide gradually into millennial glory.

4. You will find new and abundant motives to watchfulness and diligence. If you search out the numerous texts which refer to the coming of Christ, the resurrection of the saints, and the ending in judgment of this present age, you will see how thoroughly practical the subject is. Everywhere it is connected with warnings, exhortations, and encouragements.

5. It will be a preservative from worldliness. You will see that the world cannot be improved gradually by human means, as some say; that judgment hangs over it; that it will soon pass away, as regards its present fashion; and therefore you must come out from it, not lay up treasures in it, nor be conformed to its practices.

6. It will be an antidote to discouragements under apparent failure and deferred success. You will mourn over the triumphs of evil, the counter-workings of Satan, and the failure of many hopes; but you will see all has been predicted, and you will labor on as to God, still expecting to "save *some*," assured that your labor will not be in vain.

7. You will be fitted and prepared for coming troubles. The Word of God, in a vast number of places, speaks of the terrible events of the last days, declaring, over and over again, that there will be a time of trouble such as never was before, nor shall be again. Surely it is a dangerous thing to cry "Peace, peace," in the face of God's awful predictions. A fearful storm *may* burst upon the nations suddenly, disproving all the fond prophecies of man, and burying all mere human hopes in irretrievable ruin. Let us learn to regulate our expectations by God's revelation.

To these points several more might be added. It would be easy also to crowd the page with Scriptures bearing on each. But let these answers be thought upon, and tested carefully by Scripture, and we have no doubt as to what the result will be.

A reception of the premillennial view, as it is called, takes nothing away. It is a real friend to all sound doctrine and zealous service. Perhaps, with those large gains which have been mentioned, you may have some trifling losses; you may be shunned, pitied, looked upon as a fanatic, &c.; but these are small matters. But ought this question, "What shall I *gain?*" to be a leading one in this or any other point of truth? Is there not a prior one? *Is it true?* Doth God's word reveal it? Let this question be first put with earnest study and fervent prayer, and God will certainly answer it.

Surely we cannot be right in our views respecting prophecy, unless our very hearts can intelligently and lovingly blend the two following petitions: "Our Father—Thy kingdom come;" "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." And how can those Christians ask the Lord to come quickly, who place the millennium, with its antecedents and subsequents, between the hopes of the Church and His coming. Such cannot really *pray* for both.

This is not a small matter of which we speak; and we would earnestly plead with all Christians to search it out for themselves, seeking the teachings and guidance of the Spirit of truth, fearing much to neglect any of his words.

Editorial.

THE TREASURES OF HAIL.

"Hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and of war?"—Job 38 : 22, 23.

The hailstorm that passed over this city on the 8th of May, will long be remembered by those that witnessed it. There was great destruction of property, and indirectly some loss of life. In one case, of which we have heard, a child was directly killed by a blow on the head from one of the stones. Many persons would probably have been killed, had not the storm given timely warning of its approach, and had not places of shelter been so abundant

Digitized by Google

and accessible. The papers assert that some of the stones were as large as tea-cups, and weighed nearly a pound.

Hailstorms of similar violence have occurred before in different parts of the country, doing great damage to houses and trees, and growing crops. There are accounts on record of still more surprising showers of hail. An old history of France, speaks of a hailstorm in Italy, in the year 1510, at the time that Louis XII was carrying on a war there. It was preceded by some days of horrible darkness, after which the clouds broke into thunder and lightning, and there fell a shower of hailstones, which destroyed all the fish, birds, and beasts of the country. It was attended with a strong smell of sulphur: the stones were of a bluish color, and some of them are said to have weighed a hundred pounds.

This account may be an exaggeration, but there are authentic accounts of storms visiting various parts of England within the last two centuries, in which the stones measured from ten to fourteen inches in circumference, and in which men and beasts were killed, large trees split, and fields of grain cut down as with a scythe. And more certain than any of these are the records the Bible furnishes of terrific storms of lightning and hail, such as one of the ten plagues of Egypt, in which "the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and broke every tree of the field." But in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, there was no hail. Afterwards, when the five kings of Canaan combined to drive Joshua and the Israelites out of the land, the Lord fought for Joshua with great stones out of heaven, so that more of the Canaanites died from the hailstones than by the sword. That was a cannonade which no might or skill of man could resist.

And this serves to introduce us to our proper subject, viz., *the powers of nature as the executioners of God's judgments.*

During the late storm, many persons were smitten with terror and took to their knees. The more ignorant and superstitious imagined that the day of judgment was at hand. This feeling was natural. It is an instinct of the human mind to regard the elements as the instruments of Heaven's wrath. And the feeling that connects such an event with the day of judgment is not without warrant in Scripture. For, first, the powers of nature were so used of God in the recorded instances of judgment in the past. We have already cited the plague of hail as one of the judgments by which the Lord broke down the pride of Pharaoh. The discomfiture of the hosts leagued against Israel by hail, was one in the series of judgments sent to dispossess and destroy the wicked nations of Canaan. But hail was not the only natural agent called into exercise. Hail is always accompanied by clouds and wind, and intense electrical action. In Egypt, accompanying the hail, there were "mighty thunderings," and "the fire ran along the ground."

Such exhibitions of natural forces are often associated in the Scriptures with the majesty of God, and especially with His works of judgment. It was by means of extraordinary disturbance and display of these powers that the flood was brought upon the earth. The fire and brimstone that rained out of Heaven upon Sodom, were due to the same forces, although such an event is outside of our observation of their ordinary operation. All the plagues of Egypt must be referred to the same subordinate causes. God, who holds and balances all these powers in His hand, and who usually makes them ministers of blessing to His creatures, employs them also to execute His wrath. He sent a strong east wind to drive back the waters of the Red Sea, congealing them into walls of ice, and making a passage for His people through their midst to the other shore. And when the Egyptians ventured the same passage, He caused the waters to return and they were drowned. There are Bible readers, who can only look on the human and natural side of these accounts, and so reduce them to the level of ordinary events. All that is preternatural, they refer to the superstition or excited imagination of the writers. There is this human side to them. These things were not altogether outside the range of our ordinary experience. But they were none the less divine.

Digitized by Google

All the circumstances, the conjunction of forces, the wonderful adjustments and perturbations were all arranged by God to produce just the effect desired at the particular time. The plague of hail in Egypt was none the less a direct and marvellous visitation of Heaven's anger, because it was due to just such natural agencies as produced the hailstorm in this city. The hand of God must be seen in both, although, in the one case, we are clearly informed of the purpose of the visitation.

In the Book of Psalms we often meet with descriptions of these terrible works of the Lord. The judgments visited upon His enemies in the past are celebrated and set forth as examples of more fearful strokes in the future. And the same powers of nature are active in the scene, not as mere figures or emblems, but as the instruments of vengeance. For example, in the 18th Psalm, the Holy Spirit so makes use of David in celebrating his personal deliverance: "In my distress I called upon the Lord and cried unto my God; He heard my voice out of His temple, and my cry came before Him, even into His ears. Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken because He was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured; coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also and came down, and darkness was under His feet. And He rode upon a cherub and did fly, yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness His secret place; his pavilion round about Him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness that was before him, his thick clouds passed hailstones and coals of fire. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave this voice, hailstones and coals of fire." The Psalms abound in passages which thus connect the majesty of God with terrible exhibitions of cosmical forces. They are regarded as the instruments of deliverance to His people and of wrath upon His enemies. Fire and hail, snow and vapors, stormy wind, fulfil His word. And this leads us to pass on to the thought that in all the prophetic representations of the judgment to come, these agents are prominent. The text from Job directly asserts that God has this use for them in the future. "Hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and of war?"

In the 30th chapter of Isaiah, in a prophecy of a future sifting of the nations, which connects itself at least with the last judgment scenes, we read: "And the Lord shall cause His glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of His arm, with the indignation of His anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones." Such descriptions are found all through the prophets. Their primary reference is, no doubt, often to some approaching judgment upon the oppressors of His people. But they evidently look beyond to the great day of wrath of which all preliminary judgments are an earnest. Just as in the 24th of Matthew, our Lord blends His prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem with the judgments that precede His second coming, so all through the Scriptures we find the type and the antitype, the shadow and the substance wrought into one picture. The principles of the divine government do not change. The same reasons for judicial strokes exist in every age. Only the final judgment of this world will be far more terrible than any previous judgments, because its sins increase and the harvest of woe is ripening for a final reaping. The text speaks of that which is emphatically "the time of trouble, the day of battle and of war." This is the unprecedented "time of trouble" at the end of this age, of which Daniel and the Saviour speak, the GREAT TRIBULATION described by John. And the same agents of judgment in the past will be more active then. If we turn to the Book of Revelation, we find all these tremendous forces of nature invoked to aid in the work of recompense and destruction. There will be plagues of war, pestilence, and famine. The powers of the heavens shall be shaken. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood. There shall be voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and a great earthquake. We read also: "And there

Digitized by Google

fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent (*i. e.*, over 400 pounds); and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great."

It is the fashion, indeed, to regard all these descriptions as figurative. There are, it is true, in the prophets instances in which the destructive agency of these powers of nature is used to illustrate the overthrow of false systems, or the downfall of states. In the 28th chapter of Isaiah, the onslaught of an enemy upon Samaria, the crown of Ephraim, sent by the Lord to destroy it, is compared to a "storm of hail, a destroying tempest." In the 13th of Ezekiel, the Lord declares that He will beat down the refuges of lies, which false prophets had constructed for the people, with an overflowing shower, with great hailstones and with a stormy wind.

In such prophecies, the destructive force of these natural agents is manifestly used to illustrate any sort of judgment, moral or physical, by which the Lord may bring distress upon His enemies, or upon those that teach or trust in lying vanities. It is not pretended that in many cases, such descriptions are not to be figuratively understood. And this use of them is often indicated in the record. But this does not warrant the supposition that none of them are literal. The analogies of the Divine judgments in the past, the frequent employment before our eyes of these powers in the work of punishment, the universal instinct of mankind that they are so used of God, as well as the unmistakable references to them in His Word, prove that these prophecies are mainly to be literally understood. They teach that this present natural system is stored not only with "treasures of hail" against this day of trouble and of war, but with vast magazines of fire and brimstone and explosive gases, with armories of lightning and artillery of thunder. These only wait the command of God to leap forth to their work of vengeance. And doubtless one chief reason of present calamities of fire and flood, of hail and of tempest, is to keep alive in the minds of men a salutary fear of the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. When the devouring flame sweeps over a city, consuming perhaps a million of property in a single night, men are thereby taught the perishable nature of all earthly riches, and warned against heaping up treasures for the day of final burning. When a railroad train leaps from the track and a score of lives are quenched out in the crash, when a rotten piece of timber gives way, and a mass of human beings are crushed down into a living burial beneath falling walls and timbers and mangled bodies of men, as in Richmond the other day, when a great earthquake wave deluges a wide stretch of coast and sweeps thousands of helpless men, women and children into a watery grave, when the yawning waves of the ocean engulph a steamship with its freight of agonized and pallid victims, when the angry heavens open their secret treasures of fire and hail, God, in all these sends His warnings to the world to prepare for worse judgment to come. He teaches men also how helpless they are in His hands. And many times, too, He adds this lesson, that the hopes and efforts of mankind to obtain complete control over these forces of nature in this present age, are presumptuous and premature. Men may harness steam and lightning, and tie up the elements of nature in explosive compounds, such as gunpowder, but often these powers refuse his control, and break over all his restraints with an impetuous energy that spreads death and destruction around. It is only in the world to come that all things will be put under our feet.

This thought, however, is somewhat aside from the one in hand, namely, that all these hidden resources of power will be brought into play in the day of judgment. This will not be simply a day of twenty-four hours, for the Lord's day is not to be measured as is ours, but a lengthened period of trial and of sifting, in which all men and all man's works, his systems of church and state, his grand structures of commerce and of government, will all be brought to the test, and when all his secret thoughts and ways will be revealed and the results exposed. That this judgment will be, in one aspect of it, moral, that moral and spiritual forces will be concerned in it, no one will deny. But material

Digitized by Google

forces have always been employed by God for moral ends. They will be so used then. Death, the wages of sin, is in one aspect a moral punishment of moral evil, but it is no less the physical penalty of physical evil. In fact you cannot separate these things which God hath joined together. Man's conflict with evil now is just as truly physical as it is moral. We wrestle against principalities and powers of darkness—*the Prince of the power of the air*. We fight also against secret powers in nature that bring us into bondage to corruption, and finally quench this bodily life into the grave. Human life, from infancy to old age, is a fight against adverse powers that seek and finally accomplish its destruction. There are many more points of identity than we imagine between what the Bible describes as our spiritual conflict with Satan, who is also the Prince of the power of the air, and our struggle with physical evil. Physical evil culminates in death, and of death Satan has the power. So that when we are told that the ends of those divine administrations of the future, called in Scripture "the day of judgment," are moral, we are not to be deterred from the conclusion that the physical concomitants the Bible associates with it are literal verities. The judicial work of Christ comprehends also that physical system to which man belongs, and in which the evil that corrupts him is intrenched. And as man loves and practices this evil, what wonder if he reap the fruit of it on this very field of natural things in which he delights? Certain it is that this present order of things, in which men are so prone to find their pleasure, and whose good things they so clearly prize, shall furnish the instruments of that Divine judgment that shall expose the vanity of these things, and vindicate that Word of God which warns men to seek a kingdom which cannot be moved. The final scenes of this world's history, as drawn by St. John's inspired pen, represent not only the elements as armed against the objects of Heaven's wrath. The invisible powers of darkness, the demons that crowd the caverns of hell, or roam through the empty voids of space, all gather in dragon forms and horrid hordes to take part in the warfare, and to torment the bodies and souls of men. We have, in these Apocalyptic scenes, not only the last fruitless rebellion and agony of the human race, vainly exalting itself against God, but the final throes also of creation, now in bondage to corruption, as she waits and sighs for the advent of that conquering Seed of the woman, beneath whose feet the head of the serpent shall be crushed and his foul brood be driven, first out of heaven to torment the earth with its final woes, and then finally into the bottomless pit; until the atmosphere of both heaven and earth is cleared of their dark and baleful presence, and the Son of Righteousness with healing in His wings, breaks through the clouds, shedding down upon the new heavens and earth the light of His everlasting day.

But there was a practical end in the question the Lord here addresses to Job, and there are practical lessons here for us. We, who are Christians, are reminded that the time is coming when judgment must begin at the house of God. Yea, that time is already here. As we have seen, the Lord has not entirely vacated His office as judge, during these days in which His long-suffering patience waits for the world's repentance. And especially is this true of His own people. As they shall not come into condemnation in the future, only so far as their present unfaithfulness will then entail on them the suffering of loss, they must expect the Lord to judge them now; not indeed for their destruction, as will be the case with the ungodly, but for their salvation, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." He who declared Himself to Job at the time of his great trial, as the Creator and Master of all the invisible powers of the universe, cannot be thwarted, where He designs to punish. The treasures of hail, of fire, and flood, the causes of commercial blight and disaster, the adverse influences that often dissipate wealth faster than it is gained, the sources of health and disease, of life and of death, the secret springs of all human happiness or misery, are in His hands. It is vain for us to fight against God. The way of happiness and safety is always in subjection to His will, in obedience to His Word, and above all in the faithful exposure

Digitized by Google

and confession before Him of all our sins. For, it is written, if we judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord that we should not *finally* be condemned with the world." And oh, let us, who profess to have heard His call, and to have tasted His good Word, and the powers of the world to come, not be decoyed by the Great Deceiver to set our hopes and affections on earthly things. Before this world there is a judgment to come. It may seem to tarry, but it lingereth not nor slumbereth. God, who knows the times and the seasons, has His well-appointed time for its opening terrors. All things in heaven and earth must then be shaken, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

Shall we, who are Christians, be so absorbed in present things, that our salvation then shall only be "as by fire?" Shall not we rather who, by a new birth in Christ, have received a kingdom which cannot be moved, serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, for *our* God is a consuming fire?

And if this judgment must first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? How shall you, beloved readers, who have no hope nor refuge in Christ, endure the terrors of that day? When all the powers that rule in this physical system shall be shaken, and they, with the demons of the pit, who understand well how to turn these powers against us, when all that is evil in earth and hell shall be let loose and combined against those who know not God and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, how will you then stand? Death is a great evil. Even now that terror overhangs you, as you lie down and rise up in your daily walks and pleasures, but there is far worse evil to come. There is the second death, the outer darkness, the lake of fire. In the universal sifting and shaking of all created things, in the awful birth-pangs of this groaning creation, in the wild riot and rage of these mighty forces that traverse this domain, in mighty mortal struggles of Satan and the last enemy, death, to retain the dominion of the world, what will become of that little bark of life that floats you across this ocean, stored with such tempests? "Who shall stand when He appeareth?" If you do not find refuge in Christ, the Ark, you must go down forever beneath that flood. There is but one salvation. All these mighty forces, these hidden powers of motion and of being are under His control. Through all possible calamities and hazards of the future, He will bring in safety to eternal happiness and glory those who trust in Him. Will you still reject Him? Will you persist in this unequal strife, and refuse to step into the ark, while it is building before you and Christ stands pleading at the door? Alas! you will, until you awake from this sleep of death and go to Christ for light and life. What you need first, is to hear the voice of the Son of God and live. Until then, to all these sublime realities you are dead. And His voice comes to you again telling you of pardon purchased for you in His death, and life and healing brought nigh to you in His resurrection. If you would only believe these twin facts of His Gospel, you would now be saved—how that Christ died for your sins and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, thus bringing you an everlasting righteousness in place of your own poor obedience, and a pure and eternal life, in lieu of this sinful, dying life, for which the grave is already yawning. The moment you believe *these facts*, these eternal verities of God's Word about Christ, believe them, as true for you and concerning you, as a lost one needing this salvation, that moment this righteousness of God becomes yours, and this new life begins. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but he that believeth not, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him."

L. C. B.

SCRAPS AND ITEMS.

It is sometimes foolishly objected to the doctrine of a universal resurrection of the dead, that the earth would not furnish standing-room for the immense congregation. Now, we do not believe that it is the doctrine of the Scriptures, that all people who have ever lived will rise again at one and the same time. Some

Digitized by Google

have been raised already, and there will be others raised before the final resurrection. But even supposing that all should be raised simultaneously, and all stationed on the earth to meet their Judge, the utter groundlessness and absurdity of the objection which unbelief seeks to interpose can easily be demonstrated.

Take the present population of the globe at its most reasonable estimate of *one thousand millions*. Supposing it to be, then, some six thousand years (according to the common reckoning) since the creation of Adam, and taking thirty years as a generation, we shall have *two hundred generations* since Adam. If we further suppose, for the sake of simplifying our calculation, though in reality the supposition is a most extravagant one, that the population of the world has been the same as it now is ever since the end of the first generation, then one thousand millions multiplied by two hundred, will give *two hundred thousand millions* as the aggregate number of the human race who have come into existence up to the present time. Now according to the Gazetteer, England (exclusive of Wales) contains in round numbers 32,600,000 statute acres, each acre containing 4840 square yards; 32,600,000 multiplied by 4840 gives us 157,784,000,000 square yards. Each square yard again will afford ample standing-room for four persons; 157,784,000,000 again multiplied by 4, gives us 631,136,000,000 as the number of persons England, excluding Wales, would accommodate. But, as we have seen, the total number of the human race at the end of six thousand years cannot exceed 200,000,000,000; and consequently we arrive at the, to some persons, somewhat startling conclusion, that *less than one-third of the area of the little island of England would afford standing-room for every individual of the human race who has ever existed.*

THE GREAT HEATS OF 1870.

THE present year seems destined to be crowded with both political and physical phenomena. The re-establishment of the second Napoleonic empire by popular vote, the proclamation of infallibility in a mortal man, the most sudden and possibly most terrifically destructive war of modern times, the burning of Constantinople, the savage slaughter of struggling patriots in Cuba, have been and are accompanied by an almost universal drought in Europe, the failure of crops, the most awful tornadoes and electric storms, the multiplication of vast and awful conflagrations, and the most general range of earthquakes experienced within the memory of man. But not the least remarkable of all these incidents to a remarkable epoch has been the surprising succession of hot spells, that have made both hemispheres pant and swelter beneath the rays of a sun that seems to be seven times heated. For one month, with only an odd interval to give men breath, the denizens of New York, and a wide region of territory north and west of it, have groaned in the torrid temperature of Calcutta. On successive days in June the mercury rose above one hundred degrees Fahrenheit, and since then it was ten degrees higher in New York city than at Havana and New Orleans.

ANCIENT PRAYERS FOR CHRIST'S COMING.

WE have had occasion to look through numerous ancient Liturgies of the Christian Church, and find among the *Collects* prescribed for both public and private use such as the following, which we specially commend to the attention and study of those who wish to know how the ancient Christians prayed.

GRANT, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, this grace unto Thy people, to wait with all vigilance for the Coming of Thine Only-Begotten Son; that as He, the Author of our Salvation, taught us, we may prepare our souls like blazing lamps to meet Him. *Amen.*

MAKE us, O God, to abhor our own evils with our whole heart; that at the Coming of thy Son, our Lord, we may be enabled to receive His good things. *Amen.*

STIR up, O Lord, Thy power, and come, and mercifully fulfil what Thou hast promised to Thy Church at the end of the world. *Amen.*

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VIII. SEPTEMBER, 1870. No. 9.

Special Contributions.

RESTORATION AND CONVERSION OF ISRAEL.

PAUL'S great sorrow for the Jews, his strong desire and prayer to God for them, that they might be saved, seem very natural. They were his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh; the people to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory and the covenants, and the giving of the law and the service of God, and the promises; whose were the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh Christ came. The history of God's dealing with them, occupying so large a portion of the inspired Scriptures, invests them with a peculiar interest in the eyes of many, who are not their brethren according to the flesh.

Yet that interest is not so deep nor so general as we might reasonably expect it would be. Indeed, multitudes calling themselves Christians, seem to be wholly destitute of sympathy for them. They look upon that people as a nation of reprobates, finally cast off for their rejection of Christ and his salvation. But such is not the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. The declaration that "the Lord will not cast off forever" will, it is believed, be verified in relation to them. That a glorious future is in reserve for them it is the design of this article to show.

That they will be gathered from their dispersion and become the willing subjects of the Son of David, is sustained by abundant scriptural evidence. Their existence as a distinct people among all the nations where they have been scattered may be regarded as strong presumptive proof that a restoration awaits them. The other nations of antiquity, whose territory lay contiguous to that of Israel, have been blotted out of existence. The names by which they were known have been forgotten. But the Jews have not forgotten their origin. They trace their lineage back to the ancient patriarchs; and still the land in which their fathers dwelt, and the holy city Jerusalem, are invested with a peculiar sacredness in their eyes. Hoping against hope, like their progenitor Abraham, they still hold themselves in readiness to return and take possession of their ancient heritage. For as they read their inspired prophets, a restoration has been promised to them. Let us examine some of those prophecies, on which the hope of their future restoration rests. One of them is found in Isaiah, 11th chapter. A part of this prophecy reads: And in that day shall the Lord set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Hamath, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from the Islands of the Sea. And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and shall gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. That this prophecy was not fulfilled at the time the commandment went forth from Cyrus, to restore and to build Jerusalem, is evident; for the context connects this event with the righteous administration of him whom the prophet designates as a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch growing out of his roots. It connects it also with the period

Digitized by Google

when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them; and when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

And, besides, it is hardly possible, that at the time referred to, the outcasts of Israel, and the dispersion of Judah should have been gathered from the four corners of the earth.

All the captives taken by the Assyrians and by the Chaldeans were carried to the east. And all who returned, so far as the Bible gives any account of them, came from the eastern countries. Before the time of the return of the captive Jews from Babylon, there was little intercourse between the eastern and western nations. But after this, events occurred which caused a commingling of those different nations. Western Asia was invaded and conquered, first by the Greeks, led by Alexander, and afterwards by the Romans. The refluent waves of these invasions carried away *many* of its people, and scattered them among the nations of Europe. Hence, we find, that on the day of Pentecost many Jews were at Jerusalem, who were residents of most of the provinces of the Roman empire, the countries designated often in the Bible as the Islands of the Sea.

In Jeremiah, chap. 23, we find additional proof of the future restoration of Israel: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say the Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. But the Lord liveth which brought us and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them, and they shall dwell in their own land." That this relates to a future restoration is evident from the preceding context: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our righteousness." The phrase, in his days Judah shall be saved, &c., is explained by the 3d verse, which reads, "And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I had driven them, and will bring them again to their folds, and they shall be fruitful and increase."

In Jeremiah 33:14–16, the above promise is in substance repeated, and in the same chap., 25–26, this language occurs: "Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, the two families which the Lord hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? Thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith the Lord, if my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, then will I cast away the seed of Jacob and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them."

In the prophecy of Ezekiel, we find many passages relating to this subject. In the 37th chapter, the prophet, after predicting that the two nations, Judah and Israel, should be united and become one nation upon the mountains of Israel, makes this important declaration: "And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob, my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children, and their children's children forever, and my servant David shall be their prince forever." On this passage, Dr. Scott remarks: "This cannot possibly be interpreted of any events which took place before the coming of Christ, and after his coming, the Jews were soon driven from their own land, and have never regained possession of it. Yet the language is so expressive, that it seems plainly to mean that the Jews should dwell in Canaan, under the rule of Christ, from the time intended through all generations to the end of the world."

In the 38th and 39th chapters, there is a prophecy respecting the invasion of the land of Israel, in the latter days, by Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. The land invaded is spoken of as a land that had been waste, and the inhabitants as a people that had been gathered out of the nations. In connec-

Digitized by Google

tion with this prophecy, we find this declaration and promise: "And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name. . . . Then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen; but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there." In several of the minor prophets, in Hosea, Joel, Micah, and Amos, there are predictions more or less distinct, relating to the future restoration of Israel. But, passing over these, I call your attention to the prophecy of Zechariah, who prophesied after the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon. And as we have no historical account of any subsequent gathering together of that people, the predictions found in this book must have a fulfilment in the future. In chap. 10, v. 6, 9, 10, the prophet, without doubt, speaks of a future restoration of Judah and Israel. "And I will strengthen the house of Judah and will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to plant them, for I have mercy upon them; and they shall be as though I had not cast them off. And I will sow them among the people, and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children and turn again. And I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon, and place shall not be found for them." And chapters 12, 13, 14, contain a history of that people which evidently belongs to the latter days, and which represents them as dwelling in Jerusalem and in the country round about. In the New Testament we find no positive declaration relating to the restoration of Israel; but in several passages it is implied. Among these may be numbered the prophetic declaration that "He (Christ) shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and that Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." This closing part of our Saviour's prediction relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, seems evidently to imply a repossession by the Jews of their Holy City at some future period. These Scripture texts, and more of the same import, might be adduced, if necessary, prove, I think conclusively, that a future restoration awaits the ancient people of God. Predictions or promises uttered by so many different prophets, and without any intimation that they are conditional, must surely have a literal fulfilment.

I now proceed to show that the Scriptures, both of the Old and the New Testament, no less conclusively teach their future return to God in Christ. Foremost among the witnesses on this subject, we may place the prophet Jeremiah, who says: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. . . . But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts; and will be their God and they shall be my people." Jer. 31:31, 32, 33. Similar is the testimony of Ezek., chap. 37:23, 26: "Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions, but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them, so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore." These promises are connected with predictions of a future restoration which have already been considered. Very pertinent also is the testimony found in Zechariah 12:10: "And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bit-

Digitized by Google

terness for him as one is in bitterness for his first born."

By reference to the context and to Rev. 1 : 7, it will appear that the fulfilment of this prediction has not yet taken place. An examination of Paul's masterly argument, found in Romans, 11th chapter, will close the testimony relating to the future conversion of Israel. This argument is cumulative, each successive step rising higher than the preceding until the climax is reached; the whole forming an overwhelming weight of evidence. First, the apostle denies vehemently, that the fall of Israel is irrevocable and final. I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid! And then in view of the fact, that through their fall salvation has come unto the Gentiles, he argues, that if their fall and diminution be the riches of the Gentiles, much more will their fulness enrich them. And pursuing the same line of argument, he affirms that if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, the receiving of them shall be as life from the dead. And, therefore, the tacit inference, that in their conversion the world shall receive that greater blessing.

The apostle draws another argument in favor of their being reinstated in the favor of God, from the relation they sustain to their pious ancestors. He compares them to the first fruit, required by the law to be offered to the Lord; which communicated its own nature to the lump, making it also holy; and to a holy root or tree which imparts its own nature to the branches. Hence, he concludes that those branches which have been broken off because of unbelief, shall be grafted in again. It may be said, that the contingency expressed in the 23d verse, "if they abide not still in unbelief," invalidates the argument in favor of their conversion,—that their continued unbelief will prevent their being grafted into the good olive tree. But the phrase, "if they abide not still in unbelief," was evidently intended to show that they must through faith be restored to the position they had lost. For the apostle surely did not mean to say merely, that God was able to graft them in again, when they should return unto Him by repentance and faith in His beloved Son. He doubtless meant that God was able to overcome their unbelief, and make them willing in the day of his power. This view is confirmed by what follows: "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more shall those which be the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?" At this point the apostle ceases to argue, and speaks plainly of God's purposes in relation to them. He declares it to be "a mystery that blindness, in part, is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so," he adds, "all Israel shall be saved. As it is written: There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

Again, says the Apostle, "As concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your sakes, but as touching the election they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." And can those of whom such words as these are spoken be cast off forever? Impossible! Although the fulfilment of some promises may depend on the good behavior of those to whom they are given, yet a promise connected with the declaration, that the "gifts and calling of God are without repentance," cannot, surely, fail of accomplishment. And when the Apostle adds: "For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet now have obtained mercy through their unbelief, even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded (or shut up) all of them in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all," the language must be understood, not as a conditional, but as an unconditional promise. And now, if the shadow of a doubt remained with regard to the future conversion of Israel, it would seem that Paul's triumphant conclusion, "O the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God," would be sufficient to dissipate it forever.

Those then who are interested in behalf of the ancient people of God, may well rejoice in view of the abundant evidence which the Bible furnishes of the future restoration and conversion of this remarkable people.

In the argument of the apostle some weighty

Digitized by Google

considerations are presented, which should lead Gentile Christians to pray unceasingly for the deliverance of the Jews from the power of unbelief. For first, their conversion will be an event of great importance to the Church and the world. "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" Moreover, the language of the Apostle, "that through your mercy, they also may obtain mercy," indicates that this great work will be connected with the instrumentality of God's people, and in answer to their prayers.

Let us then pray that this blessed consummation may be hastened: "When the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, and when the vail which is upon their hearts shall be forever taken away." J. H.

"COME, LORD JESUS."

We wish to indicate a few reasons why it is desirable this prayer should ascend with fervor from every Christian heart.

1. He is our Lord, our Saviour, who so loved the world as to die a substitute for its sins, in consequence of which salvation is made available to "whosoever believeth in Him." Do we realize the magnitude of the obligation incurred by such a sacrifice? And if we *have* a thorough realization of it, will not the voluntary and joyful surrender of our whole being, body, soul, and spirit, to His service and disposal, as the only suitable expression of grateful feeling of which we are capable, be inevitable? And though love and gratitude are not the spontaneous products of the unregenerate heart, yet they are inseparable from the renewed nature. Now love is a strong passion, and is not satisfied unless demonstrations of word or deed evince the reality of its possession. Gratitude, too, in noble natures, ever excites the desire to reciprocate as far as possible advantages received. This is the case in merely naturally amiable persons towards those of their own species who are the objects of affection, or from whom they have received benefits of a very inferior nature indeed, compared with the inestimable boon of sin's expiation and a joyous immortality And so too, true love cannot be happy without the presence of the loved object. For individual or mutual interest, or from necessity, the separation of loved ones is sometimes indispensable; and patient acquiescence in this necessity is alleviated by the prospect of a reunion, speedy it may be, or, as the circumstances of the case may require, more remote. And then what joyful anticipations of renewed happiness and delight are indulged in prospective views of the coming meeting. How carefully is everything hoarded and preserved for the entertainment or refreshment of the beloved traveller on his return. How memory dwells upon all his kind looks and words, and deeds of love. How each thoughtless act of unkindness or neglect towards him is recalled with sorrow, and with earnest determinations to make a loving reparation in the future for the errors and omissions of the past. With what ardor are the letters which apprise us of his health and enjoyment read and prized; and how carefully are they stowed away for reperusal. What eager interest do we feel even in the new locality that contains his bodily presence; and with what pleasure do we read anything that gives information respecting it. How warm a welcome do we extend to every traveller from the distant land, and with what eager volubility do we discourse of the absent one; and as we receive the coveted information how loving anxiety plies the multitudinous questions, until the supply is scarcely proportionate to the demand. Even those otherwise uninteresting and tedious are welcomed with joy for the tidings they bring of the loved one. And, although the desire that time and space might be annihilated, has been almost accomplished in this wonderful age, yet steam and telegraph are both tardy messengers in conveying information, when premonitions of danger or evil cast sombre shadows on our hearts. And as the hour of his coming approximates, how mind and thought are preoccupied with the one idea, almost to the exclusion of everything else; and, as affection's barometer indicates that the favorable breezes shall shortly waft him to his home, how our throbbing hearts

Digitized by Google

thrill with delight. Calmness and sobriety are out of place now; we care not for the criticisms of unfeeling and uninterested spectators at our enthusiastic demonstrations of joy. *Our* loved one is coming,—not theirs,—and what care we? Their sneers may freeze their own cold natures, but the sunlight glittering on our hearts bids defiance to their power. And O, how we begin to watch for the well-known footfall: and eagerness and excited expectation will cause many a sound to be misunderstood, but our vigils go on more anxiously than ever, for did not his letter tell us to expect him any hour during the night?

And so too, love's skilful hands cleanse and embellish the habitation. All must be in complete order, and no offensive manifestations must pain his refined and fastidious nature. Taste and skill must be brought into requisition, that beauty and light may throw a glow over the sweet picture.

All must be radiant with flowers and song and good cheer, that the weary traveller may feel he is welcome home, and may be assured from his reception that love has spared no pains to evince its depth and truth.

And if such be our feelings and manifestations towards frail and fallible beings like ourselves, how should we stand affected toward Him, who so loved the guilty world as to lay down His spotless life—yea, His Deity itself—that we might be rescued from eternal condemnation? Are we not entirely insensate if we do not feel such obligations; and if we do not love Him with far deeper intensity than has ever swayed our affections toward earthly objects? Why, then, do not *all* Christians desire His presence? Although they must acquiesce patiently in His absence for a season, how can they be *satisfied* without Him? How can they forbear crying, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly?" Why cannot *Christians* of all denominations and creeds unite with us in this thrilling and fervent supplication? Do not they, as well as we, desire to see the King in His beauty? Do they not long for the realization of complete redemption, and for the transformation of their corruptible natures into the imperishable glorification of its likeness to Him? Do they not wish to express in person the love and the praises elicited by their great obligations? Do they not believe in His personal coming; or, has the Whitby theory so eradicated all hope of His veritable presence, that they are content to toil on in their stupendous work without it? And when this world and its inhabitants are rescued from Satan's dominion by *their efforts*, He will then pay a brief visit of inspection, punish the apostates, and consign this globe to annihilation! Ah! if they would read the absent One's letters more carefully they would have no such uncertain tidings. But if they *do* believe in His personal coming and reign, why do they not long for it; and why can they not unite with us in one consolidated prayer for the speedy accomplishment of this glorious object? Surely He cannot be displeased at our longings for His presence; and the blessed hope of soon greeting Him in person would only stimulate to more activity and zeal while he tarries, that we may gain from His omniscience the commendation for which we so ardently long. So far from this hope being paralyzing to usefulness, there can be no greater incentive to endurance and exertion. And just in proportion as the time is short, and an account of our stewardship is imminent, will be the energy and zeal displayed in the prosecution of his commands. It is a good test of our love to our blessed Lord, to analyze our feelings towards the earthly dear ones He has given us. If we have such longings, such pinings, such impatience for their return in absence; such desires for their society; such absorbing aims and plans to gratify them and meet their approbation in all things; such consuming anxiety and sympathy when they are exposed to peril; and such intense wishes for their worldly happiness and prosperity; and such vague and indefinite feelings towards our Lord, and such indifference as to His coming now or a thousand years hence, we may depend upon it He does not hold the first place in our heart. But if He is the supreme subject of their affections, we earnestly ask all Christians why they cannot unite with us in this prayer? Whatever opinion they may have as to the profit derived from the study of

Digitized by Google

prophecy, or as to the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of it, if they really believe in our Lord's personal reign, and if they "love His appearing," what possible objection can they have to desiring it speedily, and praying earnestly for its fulfilment?

2. Christians of all shades of belief should be unanimous in their desire for the removal of suffering. They surely must realize that their feeble and inefficient efforts can do but little towards the extirpation of so deeply rooted an evil. Blessed be God, kind sympathy and Christian benevolence can alleviate many individual instances of suffering, but the great aggravated mass of wretchedness, so stupendous in its proportions, is entirely beyond their reach. It will exist in its varied forms until He who shall make all things new will come, for He assures us the poor we shall always have with us; and we gather also from His Word, that such will be the case with every species of suffering. Does it not excite our commiseration to see grim sorrow exercising her malign sway over so vast a majority of the human race? And to feel that they can provide no remedy, and that our helpless impotence can bring no relief? Redemption is incomplete—do we not all long to see it perfected, that "sorrow and sighing" may flee away forever? Do we not know that our efforts cannot secure this, and that, although a complete remedy has been provided, its application is only partial as yet? O, if God's love has sent the sunbeams of prosperity across our happy path, do we not wish that all may participate in our joy, and the blasting curse removed from human kind and all creation? Can the groans of the suffering and afflicted fall unheeded upon our ears? Can we enjoy the evanescent good of this earthly life, and not long more intensely for those pure and immortal joys at God's right hand?

And if our lot is among the suffering and the sorrowing, shall we not the more readily sympathize with the afflicted? Shall we not feel the more keenly the necessity for a Deliverer? If our own sufferings cause us to long so earnestly for deliverance, surely the recollection that so large a portion of our fellow-beings are suffering the same woes we feel so keenly, should stimulate to a still more earnest utterance of the prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus." It is needless to dwell upon the special forms of suffering—all are painfully enough familiar with them—but certainly all Christians, the happy and the sad, should feel it to be their great and glorious privilege, their happiness and their delight, to offer up this prayer from the depths of a sincere heart. As the world grows in wickedness, of course the suffering increases, for the two are inseparably connected. The subjugation of sin, then, will quickly eradicate the suffering.

3. All Christians should earnestly desire and pray for this. Who can exercise any ordinary amount of observation, and not painfully perceive that all classes of society are deteriorating? The irreligious becoming more intensely wicked,—the lukewarm professor more indifferent and callous. Such is the testimony of friends and foes of our doctrine, who think at all upon the subject. The truthful and candid opponent admits the fact, but "his eyes are so holden" that he cannot see the cause. He conjectures many causes; and, in some instances, to a limited extent, is right; but he does not see it all as the culmination of wickedness and darkness preparatory to its final destruction. And the worst feature in the case, is the indifference to this growth in wickedness. Many cannot see it, but feel convinced the world is becoming so much better by the great efforts they are making,—and so they are incompetent to grapple with the evil. The wicked themselves are utterly reckless, and really seem to concern themselves but little about it.

How painful it is to be constrained to meet daily and hourly this wickedness in its most appalling forms. Some are not so much exposed to its contact, but they cannot but know of its existence. Can a Christian feel indifferent to it? Does he not realize how ineffectual are his attempts for its subjugation? Notwithstanding the temperance efforts and reform, when have homes been blighted to so fearful an extent in our country by the demon of intemperance? Apparently subdued for a time, it has started up with greater power than ever. The sanguine ones almost thought its hour of

Digitized by Google

dissolution had come, but Satan has resuscitated it with a new and vigorous vitality. And profanity and Sabbath-breaking surely show no signs of decrease. The influence of these sins is becoming stronger, not to mention the more aggravated ones of dishonesty, murder, immorality, free-loveism, and opposition to God's divinely appointed ordinance of marriage.

Alas! should not Lot's righteous soul be vexed from day to day with these unlawful deeds? Should not our Christian sorrow constrain us to say, "Woe is me that I dwell in the tents of Mesech?" Should not *all* Christians realize their inability to grapple with these gigantic evils, and unite their fervent prayers for the blessed Lord to come quickly? O, why should they be willing to endure them for thousands of years, if the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much? And if only two or three agree on earth as touching anything they shall ask, their heavenly Father accedes to their petition, what have we not a right to expect from the united prayers of all true Christians?

4. And should not all desire the equitable reign of God's own Son?

Where can we find perfection in human governments? Do we not desire to see the poor victims of despotic power released from the tyranny under which they groan? And are we not conscious of the evils to which republican forms of government are liable? Is unlimited freedom the best thing in the world for the unregenerate man? And if a majority of such hold the reins of government, how *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit? Is there *any* form of government upon earth perfectly desirable, and that secures to its subjects just what their needs require? And will it not ever be thus until He comes whose right it is to reign over the nations? Has not the world languished under ill government for many centuries; and should we not gladly welcome Him who can solve the problem that has perplexed statesmen in vain? Surely there might be perfect accordance in all Christian minds on this subject, and were those who believe in an indefinite remoteness of our Lord's coming, and the conversion of the world by their efforts, must confess that a government administered by fallible beings must be very imperfect indeed, even though religion's influence should cause it to be greatly superior to anything we have now. Only He who is competent to take the government upon His shoulder, can give us such a one as we need and desire.

5. The great wane of faith and the prevalence of false doctrine should cause all Christians to unite in this cry. Has it not been proven in this serial that we are rapidly approximating the period to which our Saviour's question applies, "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Are not new doctrines and monstrous opinions developing themselves almost daily? Is it not becoming almost common for each one to set up a religion for himself? And have not the partially orthodox commingled so much heresy with their teaching and thinking, that we no longer feel them to be safe guides? Has it not even allied itself with our precious doctrine, and should we not earnestly protest against *all* false doctrine, lest we become identified therewith? How sad it is that Millenarians should promulgate heresy. We have seen it in books written in defence of the Bible.

Should we not protest against such heresy, and show to all that we have no sympathy therewith? Is there not danger of bringing our doctrines into disrepute, when those who advocate them with one breath teach dangerous errors with the next? Surely we should "be not highminded, but fear," and pray more earnestly than ever for Him who only can rectify these monstrous evils.

6. And while the Bridegroom tarried they *all* slumbered and slept. What terror then is in that declaration! Thank God! those who have a needful supply of oil shall be aroused in time, but how large a number shall be found without a sufficient quantity. The longer He tarries the more imminent the danger of slumber. Would we not avoid this catastrophe? The temptations around us are so great, and our hearts are so treacherous, that we ever feel in danger of this calamity. When His bright presence is manifested we shall no longer have

Digitized by Google

this harassing dread. We shall be safe,—for we shall ever be with the Lord. And whilst there is danger from our own unsteadfastness and from Satan's suggestions and insinuations; his temptations to doubt, that drive us to despondency and uselessness, is there not also danger from the sneers and taunts of those who revile our hope? Too many confident predictions have been made as to the exact time of the Lord's relevation, and they have failed. We would not condemn the calculation and study of dates, but we should not rest too confidently upon human deductions. Nor is it well to apply descriptions to living individuals, however accurately each feature of the description may be exemplified in the individual, because in many other instances of equal correspondence, the result has not justified our certainty. And thus the cause that we desire above all to advance is brought into contempt, and there is less hope than ever of convincing those who do not see eye to eye with us. True, it has been ably shown lately in these pages, that the students of science are as liable to make mistakes as the students of prophecy, and instances of most egregious blunders have been produced to prove the truth of the assertion. But if this is admitted, their idol might be dethroned, and so they persist in crying "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." And experience amply demonstrates that in no department of science are the foundations so firmly established, that we can rest with confidence upon their deductions. The authority of great names often makes conjectural dogmatism wear the semblance of established truths.

And so there is danger from the indiscretions of friends, our own weakness, from false brethren, from those who count our hopes a delusion, from the evils in the world at large, and the only remedy for all is to be found in the answer to our prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

M. E. S.

Selections.

ABEL AND ENOCH.

THIS it is which marks the security of the believer's life. Christ is his life,—a risen, glorified Christ,—a Christ victorious over everything that could be against us. Adam's life was founded upon his own obedience; and, therefore, when he disobeyed, life was forfeited. But Christ, having life in himself, came down into this world, and fully met all the circumstances of man's sin, in every possible form; and, by submitting to death, destroyed him who had the power thereof, and, in resurrection, becomes the Life and Righteousness of all who believe in His most excellent Name.

Now, it is impossible that Satan can touch this life, either in its source, its channel, its power, its sphere, or its duration. God is its source; a risen Christ, its channel; the Holy Ghost, its power; heaven, its sphere; and eternity, its duration. Hence, therefore, as might be expected, to one possessing this wondrous life, the whole scene is changed; and while, in one sense, it must be said, "In the midst of life we are in death," yet, in another sense, it can be said, "in the midst of death we are in life." There is no death in the sphere into which a risen Christ introduces His people. How could there be? Has not He abolished it? It cannot be an abolished and an existing thing at the same time and to the same people; but God's word tells us it is abolished. Christ emptied the scene of death, and filled it with life; and, therefore, it is not death, but glory that lies before the believer. Death is behind him, and behind him forever. As to the future, it is all glory—cloudless glory. True, it may be his lot to "fall asleep" —to "sleep in Jesus"—but that is not death,

Digitized by Google

but "life in earnest." The mere matter of departing to be with Christ cannot alter the specific hope of the believer, which is to meet Christ in the air, to be with Him, and like Him, forever.

Of this we have a very beautiful exemplification in Enoch, who forms the only exception to the rule of Chap. 5. The rule is, "he died;" the exception is, "he should not see death." "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Heb. 11:5.) Enoch was "the seventh from Adam;" and it is deeply interesting to find, that death was not suffered to triumph over "the seventh;" but that, in his case, God interfered, and made him a trophy of his own glorious victory over all the power of death. The heart rejoices, after reading, six times, the sad record, "he died," to find, that the seventh did not die; and when we ask, How was this? the answer is, "by faith." Enoch lived in the faith of his translation, and walked with God three hundred years. This separated him, practically, from all around. To walk with God must, necessarily, put one outside the sphere of this world's thoughts. Enoch realized this; for, in his day, the spirit of the world was manifested; and then, too, as now, it was opposed to all that was of God. The man of faith felt he had naught to do with the world, save to be a patient witness therein of the grace of God and of coming judgment. The sons of Cain might spend their energies in the vain attempt to improve a cursed world, but Enoch found a better world, and lived in the power of it.* His faith was not given him to improve the world, but to walk with God.

And oh, how much is involved in these three words, "walked with God!" What separation and self-denial! what holiness and moral purity! what grace and gentleness! what humility and tenderness! and yet, what zeal and energy! What patience and long-suffering! and yet what faithfulness and uncompromising decision! To walk with God comprehends everything within the range of the divine life, whether active or passive. It involves the knowledge of God's character as He has revealed it. It involves, too, the intelligence of the relationship in which we stand to Him. It is not a mere living by rules and regulations; nor laying down plans of action; nor in resolutions to go hither and thither, to do this or that. To walk with God is far more than any or all of these things. Moreover, it will sometimes carry us right athwart the thoughts of men, and even of our brethren, if they are not themselves walking with God, It may, sometimes, bring against us the charge of doing too much: at other times, of doing too little; but the faith that enables one to "walk with God," enables him also to attach the proper value to the thoughts of man.

Thus we have, in Abel and Enoch, most valuable instruction as to the sacrifice on which faith rests; and, as to the prospect which hope now anticipates; while, at the same time, "the walk with God" takes in all the details of actual life which lie between those two points. "The Lord will give grace and glory;" and between the grace that has been, and the glory that is to be, revealed, there is the happy assurance, that "no good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly." (Psalm 84:11.)

It has been remarked, that "the cross and the coming of the Lord form the termini of the Church's existence," and these termini are prefigured in the sacrifice of Abel, and the translation of Enoch. The Church knows her entire justification through the death and resurrection of Christ, and she waits for the day when He shall come and receive her to Himself. She, "through the Spirit, waits for the hope of righteousness by faith." (Gal. 5:5.) She does not wait for righteousness, inasmuch as she, by grace, has that already; but she waits for the hope which properly belongs to the condition into which she has been introduced.

My reader should seek to be clear as to this.

* It is very evident that Enoch knew nothing whatever about the mode of "making the best of both worlds." To him there was but one world. Thus it should be with us.

Digitized by Google

Some expositors of prophetic truth, from not seeing the Church's specific place, portion, and hope, have made sad mistakes. They have, in effect, cast so many dark clouds and thick mists around "the bright and morning star," which is the proper hope of the Church, that many saints, at the present moment, seem unable to rise above the hope of the God-fearing remnant of Israel, which is to see "the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings." (Mal. 4.) Nor is this all. Very many have been deprived of the moral power of the hope of Christ's appearing, by being taught to look for various events and circumstances previous to the moment of His manifestation to the Church. The restoration of the Jews, the development of Nebuchadnezzar's image, the revelation of the man of sin—all these things, it is maintained, must take place ere Christ comes. That this is not true, might be proved from numerous passages of New Testament scripture, were this the fitting place to adduce them.

The Church, like Enoch, will be taken away from the evil around, and the evil to come. Enoch was not left to see the world's evil rise to a head, and the judgment of God poured forth upon it. He saw not "the fountains of the great deep broken up," nor "the windows of heaven opened." He was taken away before any of these things occurred; and he stands before the eye of faith as a beautiful figure of those, "who shall not all sleep, but shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." (1 Cor. 15:51, 52.) Translation, not death, was the hope of Enoch; and, as to the Church's hope, it is thus briefly expressed by the apostle, "To wait for the Son from heaven." (1 Thess. 1:10.) This, the simplest and most unlettered Christian can understand and enjoy. Its power, too, he can, in some measure, experience and manifest. He may not be able to study prophecy very deeply, but he can, blessed be God, taste the blessedness, the reality, the comfort, the power, the elevating and separating virtue of that celestial hope which properly belongs to him as a member of that heavenly body, the Church; which hope is not merely to see "the Sun of righteousness," how blessed soever that may be in its place, but to see "the bright and morning star." (Rev. 2:28.) And as, in the natural world, the morning star is seen, by those who watch for it, before the sun rises, so Christ, as the morning star, will be seen by the Church, before the remnant of Israel can behold the beams of the Sun.

HOW TO LEAD A SPIRITUAL LIFE.

How is the spiritual mind to be kept spiritual? Will a renewed heart "keep sweet" of itself? or will grace live within us without watching? Will spirituality grow without tillage of the heart-garden?

To these questions Christian experience says, *No!* Conversion brings a man into a new state—"all things have become new;" but yet there is a stiff undercurrent running toward the *old* state. No converted man, however thoroughly renewed by the Divine Spirit, will *stay converted* unless God watch over him and he watch over himself. Conversion is simply the turning of the heart from sin to the Saviour; and, unless the heart hold fast to Christ and Christ hold fast to it, that heart will drop away into self-indulgence, pride, unbelief, and besetting sins. Paul would not have remained Paul for four-and-twenty hours if Divine power had not kept him. "Not I, but Christ that liveth in me." "I can do all things, *through Christ* which strengtheneth me."

What are the essential things to maintain spiritual-mindedness?

I. Prayer, of course, comes among the foremost. Not *saying* prayers; but praying. A dull, formal, monotonous repetition of devout phrases every night and morning puts the conscience to sleep, just as surely as a low crooning tune puts a baby to sleep, in a cradle. But genuine prayer is quite a different thing from that. It is the soul's keeping the track open, and maintaining a *constant intercourse with God.* Prayer is just as vital a thing to my heart as are the water-pipes in my house that connect with the Ridgewood reservoir. A double office belongs to the conduit-pipe of

Digitized by Google

prayer; it serves at once as the inlet of grace, and as the outlet of gratitude. I thank God for what he gives; and I receive the gifts to be thankful for. And our prayers do not smell enough of the sweet holy fragrance of gratitude. For a sinner to be *anywhere* out of perdition is a matter for thanksgiving; but to be actually on the highway to heaven, with the love-light of Jesus' face streaming on us, is enough to make one's "feet to be like hind's feet," and to set us leaping like the roe. "In everything give thanks"

Prayer, then, is the channel for gratitude and penitence to flow God-ward; the channel for grace and strength to flow from Him into our dry hearts. When the channel gets clogged up with doubts and unbelief, or gets frozen up with selfishness and indifference, the supplies stop, and *death begins*. Just as soon attempt to keep up a blooming and fruit-bearing piety without perpetual prayer, as to set your geraniums into full flower by locking them in a Greenwood vault.

I have always observed that backslidings begin with a neglected closet and a neglected prayer-meeting. "Why don't the water run in my house to day?" I send for the plumber; and he says to me: "Friend, the connection is broken." Woe to that professing Christian who has broken his connection with his God!

I sometimes think of prayer as a celestial telegram. Our messages go upward with the speed of thought. The return of mercies flow downward with the promptness of Divine love. Sometimes the answer anticipates the request. Sometimes the answer is delayed; then we can only *wait*. Sometimes it comes, in a startling shock—like a death-messenger over the wires. But it is all right; God makes no mistakes. Faith says, "I put myself in connection with the God of love, I must take just what his wisdom sends. Thy will be done!"

Ah! there is something far worse than to receive dispensations of trial from yonder Father of lights. It is to have the telegraph of prayer so utterly out of repair by disuse, or so broken down, that all communication stops, and the soul is cut off from heaven. But a healthy Christian's spiritual telegraph is ever busy; it worketh by the electricity of love. Up into the All-hearing ear floweth the constant stream of confession, penitence, desire, gratitude and petition; and downward cometh the "grace sufficient," the strength equal to the day, the joys in the Holy Ghost. Then, brother, *pray without ceasing*. A true child of grace was never born dumb.

II. The second essential to spirituality is watchfulness. "What I say unto you, I say unto all—*Watch!*" Christ knew perfectly well to whom he was talking. In coupling together prayer and self-watching, he married the sovereignty of God to the Christian's free agency. Never yet have we seen the heart that could be trusted without oversight. It must be a close, weary, wakeful watch. If you were set to keep a bird sitting unfastened on the palm of your hand, you would know what is meant by *keeping your heart with all diligence*. Have the arm of godly resolution ready—ready to seize it the moment it attempts to fly away into sinful indulgence. Do not take off your eye one instant. The price of a spiritual life is "eternal vigilance." The lusts of the flesh will steal silent marches on us; temper will start up like an unchained mastiff, and bite before we are aware; the unruly tongue gets loose; pride gets the reins, or some other besetting sin is on the move. "Therefore, I say unto you all, *Watch*." Watch the sly approaches of the tempter. Watch the thought-cradles in your own soul wherein the infant purposes are nursed. Watch over your own resolutions. Watch the leading of God. Watch for opportunities to do good. Watch for the coming of your Master. While the *Martha* of your industry and your benevolence is busy within, let the Mary of your devout vigilance be ever on the lookout for the coming of your Lord. Blessed are those servants whom, when the Master cometh he shall find *watching!*

"Beyond the watching and the weeping,
Beyond the waking and the sleeping,
Beyond the sowing and the reaping,
We shall be soon.
Love—rest—and home,
Sweet home!
Lord! tarry not, but come!"

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

THOUGHTS ON HEAVEN.

Not long since, I was at a prayer and conference meeting, where the great theme was heaven, but though some seemed to be enraptured, my soul was pained. Heaven's greatest and most desirable elements seemed to have been in a great measure lost sight of. A mere heaven of pleasure may suit a Mohammedan, or an unthinking Christian, but it is not the heaven for me. I want no heaven of which the "Lamb" is "not the light of it," the all and in all of it. Myriads of things may and ought to enter into our ideas of that holy place, but that is the great central one. We want to be like Christ, and to be with Him, and without both, we care not for your heaven.

In another meeting, the majority of those present being children, a Sunday School superintendent, said to them, in heaven the meetings will not break up. His intention was to add to the attractions of that world.

In something of a similar strain, we sometimes sing of that blissful world,

> "Where congregations ne'er break up,
> And Sabbaths have no end."

Such remarks are frequently made; and the impression is given that heaven is an absolute and unchanging state—an eternal Sabbath, with only Sabbatic exercises. But are not such ideas repulsive to the thinking, especially if they are young? I remember of having heard of a person, who remarked, that he could not see what pleasure there could be in sitting on clouds singing Psalms. Doubtless, the only reason why such thoughts do not more frequently rise in men's minds, is because they think so little. They do not stop to think what an unchanging state must be. Perhaps, to many a thinking, unregenerate heart, an unchanging, unsubstantial, merely Sabbatic heaven, is only a little more tolerable than the lake of fire. Were it not that they cannot remain in this present state, and they are taught to regard heaven as a city of refuge from hell, they would not desire it. In their minds heaven may be the less of two evils, between which they must choose. No doubt, to many minds, its safety is the most desirable thing they can see in it. That may be the great and only reason why they want to go there. To the restless, roving, curious, and love-of-change disposition of man, a do-nothing-but-sing-Psalms world is utterly intolerable. Idleness is not rest. Idleness soon wearies and kills. The continuance of the same thing, no difference what it is, soon satiates, cloys, and wearies. We want change, and we must have it, or enjoyment, pleasure, and happiness, are out of the question. We must have it, or we are tormented.

Change is essential to happiness. This is true of the renewed and of the unrenewed man. It is innate, and neither grace, death, nor the resurrection will eradicate it. It is God-implanted, and must forever remain in us. Like the other original, grand characteristics of our nature, it is eternal, as eternal as our existence. A world where there would be no change, would be no good place for us. It would be a world of misery—utterly unendurable.

I know of no place in the Bible which tells us of an unchanged, unchanging, mere Psalm-singing heaven. Such a heaven is not adapted to our nature; and certainly such ideas of it had their origin cutside of the Holy Book. They appear to be stereotyped, but they are only handed down by tradition. I verily believe they had their origin in the old Ptolemaic Astronomy. Men sought to make their Bible and their theology harmonize with that system. Whatever might be true or false, they were assured that that system of Astronomy was according to sight, and therefore could not be false. Could they doubt what they saw? Ah, they had not learned that even sight is often deceptive. They were sure they saw everything outside of this world moving around it, while it was itself immovable. They saw no motion in the earth, they felt none, and could they doubt their senses? They were assured that, by the word of the Almighty, this solid world is immovably fixed—hanging on nothing,

Digitized by Google

As it was regarded as madness to doubt their senses, therefore the Bible and Theology must bend to sight. Though that system has long since passed away, much of the Theology based upon it, has been stereotyped, and remains. With many it would be wellnigh as impious to doubt that old Ptolemaic Theology, as it would once have been to have doubted the old Astronomy. According to that Astronomy, there could be no solid world but this, therefore, Theology must teach the same. Nothing outside of this world must have substantiality. The abode of the Adorable One, and the home of the blessed, must have no more substantiality, if as much, as a cloud. They would not deny the resurrection, but the conclusion was that the resurrection body must at least be as unsubstantial as its future abode. A recent writer has advanced the idea, that the spiritual body may be of a substance resembling luminiferous ether, a something, or supposed something, that is even more unsubstantial than light. If the resurrected man is to be such a being, the substantiality of a cloud is not needed for his future abode; and his employments must be as visionary and unreal as himself.

Others seem to have had the idea that heaven is something like an island in empty space—perhaps, a luminiferous ether island. Around it they have placed battlements to prevent the inhabitants from falling off. The idea appears to have been current, that if one should be cast over these battlements, down he goes. That Satan, for his rebellion, was cast over them, and spirit as he is, down he went. How wonderfully those battlements of heaven have added to the eloquence of sermons; and what poetic effect it has given them—rhapsodizing the visionary and unthinking. Like many other things, which are better poetry than theology, those battlements have wellnigh become the indispensables of some pulpits.

But the Bible speaks of no unsubstantial heaven—of no ether island surrounded with battlements. It informs us "the righteous shall inherit substance"—not visions—not sublimated etherealities. It tells us of no heaven, as a home for the righteous, less substantial than our present abode. The risen, glorified Son of God, whose body could be felt and handled, and therefore must have been substance, ascended as it was to heaven. A substantial body must have a substantial abode. The changed, not etherealized or sublimated, bodies of Enoch and Elijah, ascended to heaven. They must have required a substantial abode. The resurrected bodies of the Saints will have substantiality, for they will be like the risen, glorified body of the Son of God. Their abode must be as substantial as themselves. The risen, glorified Saints will also require change. Their bodies will be changed, but not their natures. Every effect of sin will be removed from us. The ruins of the fall in us will be completely repaired; but our God-given natures will only be perfected—not destroyed, nor eradicated. That which we have that is God-implanted, is innocent, and only needs perfecting.

The desire of change is innate or God-given, and therefore is right if kept within due bounds. Indeed, it is essential to our happiness. There can be no happiness without change; and I am assured, there will be none, there can be none hereafter without it. To the holy, there will be no eternal sameness—infinitely far from it. No holy one will be imprisoned within the battlements, where they can have no change, and no employments except those which are strictly Sabbatic. The home of the blessed will not be a kind of celestial prison, as that of the lost is an infernal one. The holy exercises of the Sabbath are delightful, but for any of them to continue so, they must be changeful, and not incessantly the same thing. No difference what it is, how pleasant or even delightful, it at first may be, sameness wearies—sameness becomes intolerable. Confinement and sameness would destroy the bliss of heaven.

Our blessed Saviour has expressly said of those who are accounted worthy of the blissful resurrection, that they shall be "equal to" and "as the angels." Matt. 22:30; Mark 12:35; Luke 20:36. Angels are not shut up to one world, nor confined to one set of employments. It is true, all their employments are holy. To them, no others would be delightful. Anything unholy would be unnatural, painful and intolerable to them. The same will be equally true

Digitized by Google

of the redeemed. Sin will have lost all its deceitful charms. It will have ceased to please. It will be perfectly hateful.

But there may be endless variety, and no sin in that variety. So there may be endless change, and no sin, no decay, no dimness, no alloy, no unhappiness enter into any one of those changes. There may be endless change, and each change a progression. The employments may be even more varied than they are in this life—incomparably more so, and yet God be glorified in each and every one of them, and man be perfectly happy in each of them.

The worship of God is, to the renewed soul, perfectly delightful, yet it would be far from our duty for any one of us to be all the time engaged in the formalities of it. Delightful as it is, the most holy must have change, or it wearies, and "when weariness begins, devotion ends." So it will be hereafter. Angels have perfect delight in hymning the praises of God around the throne, but, doubtless, it would weary even an angel to do nothing else. There is no doubt but the variety of their duties gives them unspeakable pleasure. It is delightful to them to go to any and every world to which God may send them, whatever may be the errand. Doubtless, every world is visited by them, and every part of God's works explored. The variety of their duties and employments may give pleasure and zest even to angels. So, undoubtedly, it will be with those who shall be made "equal to the angels." With hearts attuned to the praises of God, and communing with Him, they will find constant sources of unspeakable pleasure in doing His whole will, and in prying into and studying all His works. Their services will, doubtless, be endless in variety, and each one of them will afford unspeakable pleasure.

Also all the avenues of knowledge will be wide open before them. Angels visit our world, and doubtless, they may, and do pass into any and all parts of God's realm.

In viewing all His works, and His providences in all parts of His empire, they are continually learning what God is—how good, great, glorious, almighty and infinite He is. Thus their minds are enlarged, and their hearts expanded and drawn out toward God. They learn what they could not have learned, if they had been shut up in one or two worlds, no difference how glorious those worlds might be.

In their visits and explorations, angels are not confined to the heaven and the earth, but their limits are the universe. Their investigations are into all that God is, and all He has done. As His works are like Himself, and worthy of Himself, it will require eternity to visit and explore His realm. It will require eternity for even an angel to learn all that may be known of God.

Doubtless, the only limits set to the explorations and investigations of the redeemed will be the universe. and their time for doing it, eternity. God, not Sin nor Satan, has implanted within us the desire of travelling, seeing, learning, and knowing. The eye is never satisfied with seeing, the ear with hearing, nor the mind with knowing. Eternity with its infinite variety, and its infinity of time, alone can satisfy us; and it will do it fully. Eternity will be sufficient for the enlarged capacity and desires of all the redeemed. Undoubtedly, it will be a part of the work of eternity to gratify those laudable, innate desires of seeing, hearing, and knowing.

God will gratify all the innocent and native cravings of our natures. He would not have implanted them within us, if he had not intended to gratify them. Notwithstanding our desires and efforts to learn, we now know but in part, then "that which is in part shall be done away. Now we know in part, but then even as also we are known." 1 Cor. 13:9, 12. Innumerable sources of knowledge and pleasure, which are now unknown, will then be opened up to us. When we enter the school of Christ, we do it as disciples, learners; and learners we will forever remain. There will be lessons enough—glorious enough—comprehensive enough for eternity. It will require eternity for the finite to find out or survey the works of the infinite God. It will require eternity for us or an angel to learn all that is to be known of the Infinite One. Through all nature there may be sources of knowledge of the great God and our Saviour which can never be exhausted.

Digitized by Google

Now ten thousand indices point us to the great and glorious One, to which our eyes are criminally closed; then they will be opened. Many are now almost as careless about studying nature, as if they had no interest in studying her God—no interest in her God. They are almost as careless about the works of God as the brutes which perish. Their consciences, perhaps, trouble them, if they neglect God's word, but they can neglect his works without any compunctions.

Then all the holy will be thoroughly awake to these duties and privileges, and desirous to learn everything that will teach them the transcendent perfections of God. The sources of true knowledge and of true pleasure will be infinitely diversified and eternal. They will be perfectly adapted to every mind and to every capacity, and to enlarge and reach every heart. They will be perfectly suited to the innate cravings of our natures. It will not be one thing, but everything that will gratify.

The field of knowledge which delights every scholar will be opened before him, and glorious and unexpected beauties will be seen in them. The disabilities which sin has imposed, will all be removed. Great celestial changes will quicken our minds—quicken us in every sense, so that knowledge, which now may require years to acquire, may then only require seconds. Knowledge may then be wellnigh intuitive; and yet there will be enough to require eternity to find out. All the lessons of eternity—all the knowledge we may acquire, will not only teach us of God, but be a means of making us like Him. Our progression toward the Infinite One will be inconceivably rapid and eternal.

Eternity will afford us all the variety and all the changes which our natures demand, and with each change there will be progression. There will be eternal progression toward the Infinite One.

Such is the heaven our natures require—a heaven of endless change and endless progression; and such is the heaven which the great volumes of God reveal. It will be perfectly adapted to every renewed soul. There will be everything which the mind, feelings and desires of every holy one require. There will be nothing repulsive in it to any one who has the nature of a man. Sin must unhumanize a man—must unman him, in order for him to find anything repulsive, anything that is not delightful in heaven.

There is, doubtless, an analogy running through all worlds. What may be essential to the happiness of one intelligent being in one world, may be to all other intelligences. The whole universe is, no doubt, characterized by changes and endless progression. It is not the law of one world, but of all. Brutes may not need progression, but it is evidently essential to the happiness of all intelligences. If there is an intelligent race in any world, that can be happy without change, they are essentially different from ours. While there is endless diversity in the characteristics of the various intelligent families of the heavens, I doubt if there is one which is so essentially different from our own, that they can be happy without change.

On account of sin, it seems to have become necessary, that man should, in a great measure, be insulated from all other intelligences. The same may be true of all fallen worlds; but there are great reasons, which lead us to suspect that insulation is confined to fallen worlds; or more properly, to their inhabitants while in their present and unrestored state. If so, when our world shall cease to be a fallen one, and when other worlds, having been restored, shall cease to be fallen, then, doubtless, in a very important sense, insulation shall cease. The grand telegraphic wires, which God has running through all parts of His empire, and which even science reveals to us, will not only convey communications to all, but those despatches will be read and understood by all the restored, and by all the unfallen. In the case of the glorified, there will be, no doubt, an actual visitation of all worlds, and an actual converse with their intelligent inhabitants. The fulfilment of certain portions of God's word requires this.

In these thoughts can be seen some reasons, in addition to those which are generally given, why heaven will be heaven indeed—why it will be gloriously adapted to every glorified being. Let us ever strive to reach it. J. B.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VIII. OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER, 1870. Nos. 10 & 11.

Special Contributions.

PROPHETIC TIME.

In regard to Chronological Prophecy, the first question that suggests itself is: *Where are we*, and whither are we tending? Hence it becomes a matter of the very first importance, that we accurately distinguish between *time* revealed, and *events*, the time of which has not been revealed. And here it may be profitable to take a retrospect, not only to avoid the errors of the past, but that we may know with the more certainty whereunto we may have attained, and what of all our endeavors, we may reasonably hope, may abide unshaken, because in harmony with the divine record, and thus serve as an increment to faith, and a point from which to direct further inquiry.

When Mr. Miller, some thirty years ago, by figures which "do not lie," and by combinations and calculations which *sometimes* "do lie," demonstrated that our Lord *must come* in the year of grace 1844, and that on a particular day of a particular month, it was making of prophecy a very convenient arrangement for the judicious disposition of our affairs, whether relating to this present, or the future life. Had such a revelation been made for the guidance and benefit of the Gentile Church, and with the certain knowledge of such a crisis impending, confessedly for once the *saints* would have occupied the vantage-ground, and realized in their own experience, that "godliness was profitable!" The kings of earth would gladly have sat at her feet and received counsel at her hand! It thus remains an eternal truth, never to be changed or modified: "Of that day and hour, no one knoweth, not an angel in heaven, neither *can* know, but the Father." Mark 13: 32.

The event here presented prominently before the mind, is the coming of Christ, for the deliverance of his Church—the *time of which is not revealed.* This most plain and unambiguous declaration, should be engraven upon the heart and memory of all students of God's holy word, and the errors of the past, should serve as beacons for all future time. That which our Lord declared for a truth in his day, and by which he would instruct his disciples, not to pry too curiously into that which the Father had reserved in his own power, is doubtless applicable to the entire dispensation, and in being thus recorded, may never be ignored. So far, as can now be called to mind, no like restriction is enjoined, or imposed upon any other inquiry, whether relating to the mode or design of His coming, the nature or manner of the kingdom, or the signs which should precede or accompany its manifestation. All these are subjects of abundant revelation, sustaining certain relations to the existing order of things, and marked by peculiar and definite periods, and that too in the order of precedence and succession. Hence we are prepared to speak with some degree of positiveness, that certain events cannot transpire, because of the precedence in order of other events which are also future. But the coming of Christ to receive his waiting Church, stands related in order of time to no event that is connected with chronological prophecy, or revealed time. This

Digitized by Google

may be regarded as a bold assertion, a startling proposition, but it has its foundation in the wisdom of God, in sustaining faith and inspiring hope.

In chronological prophecy "the vision was for many days," and "the time was long." The *order* of events are stated in minute detail, and all affecting existing earthly relations and governments, imperilling their perpetuity, and contemplating their ultimate overthrow, *not however by the Gentile Church*, but through the efficiency and power of God, in performing the promise made unto the fathers. In all this there is no concealment of time. It was to "the fourth generation," the inheritance was given, after an interval of "four hundred years." This is definite and sufficiently explicit for any student, and a wayfaring man need not err.

After the forfeiture of the inheritance, *conditioned upon an observance of the Law*, and the interruption of the Davidic rule, it was specially revealed that the captivity of the Jew, in his dispersion, should be continued through four dynasties, marked by certain definite periods and order of succession. These periods are measured by specified time, and are—"seven times"—or "time, times and half a time," or specific numbers—"two thousand and three hundred." "One thousand two hundred and sixty,"—"one thousand two hundred and ninety," or "thirteen hundred five and thirty" days. But to the Christian Church, concerning her hope to be realized at the coming of her Lord to accomplish her deliverance, there are no interposed periods, or order of events, that would *necessitate* delay, and hence the injunction ever remains—*Watch.*

Nor is there anything antagonistic to this view, in the admonition addressed by Paul unto the Church at Thessalonica, to correct the error of those who taught "that the resurrection hath already been," or as here expressed, "That the day of the Lord *is already* come," 2 Thess. 2:2. Some in the Church at Thessalonica were disturbed by erroneous teaching, that the consummation had been already reached, and they had been passed by, or failed of their reward, of being participants in the first resurrection, which error Paul corrects. Had he, however, told them, that in no sense answerable to the import of the phrase, "the coming of the Lord," and our being gathered together to him, he *could so come* before the revelation of "that man of sin," he would have rendered meaningless the injunction to "watch," and connected the Church with revealed Jewish time, and rendered the rapture of the Church, in order to the manifestation of "that wicked one," an impossibility. Take the first three chapters of the Revelation, as made known to St. John, which doubtless contemplate the *completion* and *rapture* of the Gentile Church, and determine, if possible, aught respecting the *time*. It is because "the coming of the Lord, and our gathering together unto him" is a matter of such vital importance to the activity of faith, and holy living, that its imminency is enjoined upon the faith of the Church in every age, and the consoling hope is for every trial and persecution that may befall her. Not so, however, the *manifestation* of the kingdom; this *cannot* occur while "Jerusalem is trodden under foot of the Gentiles"—"until that man of sin" has been revealed, and until the *times* of Daniel shall have expired.

Another error, less glaring, but equally fatal in its results, has of late found favor, and extensively prevailed in certain "schools of the prophets;" that of connecting the coming of the Lord for the removal and rapture of the Church, or allying it, in the order of dependency, with events solely pertaining to the present existing world—kingdoms of earth. There is great subtlety in the reasoning by which this error is introduced, and is therefore the more calculated to deceive, although in its results it does not differ in any material sense from the former. Hence "Napoleonism" has exerted a wider influence than "Millerism," and has led captive minds which the latter could not have beguiled. The earnest and able author of "The Last Vials," has forecasted European politics from a Prophetico-Napoleonic standpoint for the past twenty years, and still it remains about as uncertain as ever. Just now, the Napoleonic star does not appear to be in the ascendant. So too, the commencement of Mr. Baxter's "three and a half years" of the Antichristian

Digitized by Google

"League and Covenant" has certainly been delayed more than twice the three and a half years, since an opportunity was afforded to determine the correctness of the exegesis upon which his conclusions were founded.

We should, therefore, learn to interpose no event before the coming of the Lord to receive His waiting Church. Nor have we a divine warrant so to associate or connect it with any event, or series of events, in the order of precedence or dependence, but that it might occur before the dawn of to-morrow's light. But on the other hand, *we do know*, that until the times of Daniel are exhausted, and the order and series of events therein made known, shall have transpired, *the kingdom*, in its relation to the existing world-powers, *will not be manifested*.

After our Lord's resurrection, when the disciples asked Him, "Wilt thou *at this time* restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said, "It is not for you to know *times* or *seasons*, which the Father hath reserved to His own authority." Acts 1:6–7. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are *publicly known*" (revealed), "belong unto us, and to our children forever." Deut. 29:29.

But this error is very far from being exclusively a sin of the fanatical (?) millenarian; it presses with a mountain weight upon the popular idea, so prevalent in the modern Church, which hesitates not to interpose the entire period of the millennium itself, but also the untold cycles of "Gospel effort" as a necessary prerequisite for its accomplishment. And all this, in order that the Gentile Church (has she not become a harlot?) may reign *without* her Lord! Surely the thought alone is sufficient to chill the fervor of the longing soul, while a cherished hope for such delay is closely allied to sacrilege.

According to the almost unanimous consent of our most eminent and accredited expounders of God's holy word, prophetic times are about exhausted—their course has nearly run—their cycles are nearly complete, and yet it must be confessed, that no certain or positive results, answerable to the expectations of the Christian Church have been realized; so that with some, faith has failed, and hope expired. The question then returns: Have we no certain guide—no chart to sustain faith; or are we merely floating in the great ocean of God's secret counsel or unrevealed purpose, without star or compass? Is there nothing revealed in "the covenants of promise" upon which we may surely rely, that earth's conflict is approaching its final consummation.

The question, however, may assume quite another aspect, and the Jew may retort: "Has not the Gentile Church thrust herself into the great drama of prophetic events, where no part has been assigned her? She has no earthly inheritance—her citizenship is in heaven, in resurrection life and glory, and she is to reign with her Lord. Her triumph affects not the nations in the flesh—imperils not the thrones of the Cæsars or the Napoleons,—nor is the time of her rapture in anywise connected with the dynasties of earth. But the manifestation and development of the restored Davidic rule, *always*, and *necessarily has respect to the land* promised of God unto the fathers, and the *inheritance* in *the flesh*, in the "*soma psychikon*," with which the *Church*, as such, has nothing to do, and directly affects the other nations of earth, into whose hand the dominion has been committed, until the indignation be passed; and because of the relations the future inheritors of the earth sustain towards them, therefore the world-kingdom of our Lord, in its relations and antagonisms with existing world-kingdoms of earth, is alone the subject of prophecy.

The hope of the Christian Church is a heavenly inheritance, in resurrection life, in the "*soma pneumatikon*," in joint heirship with Christ, and the time of her rapture, or of her marriage, is not revealed. How long it may antedate the manifestation of the kingdom, we are nowhere informed. But the hope of the Jew, is restoration from captivity and the inheritance of Palestine—the land in which Abraham sojourned and their fathers dwelt, *and their restoration is the hope of the world*. The Antichrist affects the dominion of the earth, to the detriment of the Jew, and is the "mystery of iniquity," that has leavened the whole lump, in the vain attempt to convert and "*hold* the earth for Christ."

Digitized by Google

The hope of the Jew contemplates the restoration of the Davidic rule, and until then, by prophet and by seer, are portrayed *their* trials, tribulations, sufferings, and persecutions, and they constitute a dark history. The "saints" of Daniel are Jews, and not Gentile Christians. The prophetic histories of Daniel and John are, therefore, not designed to set forth the antagonisms of Gentile domination, against the Church of this dispensation, but the antagonisms of the world-powers in Gentile hands, against the Jew, and against the world-kingdom of the Son of David, of which the Jews are the *inheritors*. Such is the hope of the Jew, and their high destiny secured to them by "the covenants of promise," and confirmed by the oath of God; an inheritance in the flesh, in reference to which, and in order to its completion, the curse shall be removed, and the earth in all the spontaneity of primeval fertility shall yield her abundance. It is earth's conflict and restoration—it is *man's* triumph and redemption, that forms the burden of the unfulfilled prophecies concerning the kingdom. It is the inheritance which pertains to the "circumcision," that endangers "the balance of power" and awakens alarm. The present indifference is owing to unbelief in the Divine sufficiency, but when the Jews are restored—"Will Gog not know it?" The "starry crown" of the resurrected saint, is a matter of indifference to the potentates of earth; but it is the restoration of the Davidic throne that endangers their own. It is thus the persecutions of "the fourth *beast*" and "the little horn" of Daniel's prophecy is resumed by St. John, soon after the removal of the present Christian or Gentile Church, as recorded in the first three chapters, and after which we hear no more of a Church upon the earth, but we have constant reference to "*the saints*." The whole scenery becomes again intensely Jewish in antagonisms with "the beast" and "the horns"—the *then* existing world-powers of earth. It is the relation of this people—God's chosen people, to the world-powers of earth, of which the prophet speaks. It is their trials and persecutions which are so minutely delineated by the pen of inspiration; and it is to them, *and not the Church*, the termination of prophetic times have peculiar significance. It is to the Jew, the knowledge is conveyed that "the times of the Gentiles" are nearly exhausted, and without which the long-looked for kingdom cannot be manifested. But not one word in all this to the Christian Church, but that at any time her Lord may come for her deliverance and removal, and hence the oft-repeated command to "watch."

While it is not denied, that the trials and conflicts of the Christian Church are more or less implied in some of the old Testament prophecies, still it is maintained, that such is not their *primary* design. And more than this, it was a matter hidden in the secret counsel of God, and only by direct revelation made known to Paul, "that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and partakers of the promise in Christ, by the Gospel." (Eph. 3:6.) We can hardly then suppose, as present in prophetic vision, to the mind of the seer—the glory, sufferings, or triumphs of the Gentile Church, or even in the mind of the Spirit, if it was a *new revelation* to Paul, rather than the unfolding of that which had been overlooked, but was yet contained in the Scriptures. Indeed, it is the world-kingdom of our Lord, that is *alone* the subject of the visions of both Daniel and John. So too in the Apocalypse, when he had opened the fifth seal, "the cry of the souls under the altar for vengeance upon them that dwell upon the earth" bespeak their Jewish relations, as opposed to the then existing powers of earth.

The times of Daniel are *revealed times;* our Lord himself introduces "the abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel in its appropriate place, and also of the tribulation that should follow—all this is manifestly in the order of sequences as having relation to the Jewish nation; but as he stood related to his Church, no revelation as to time or order of events was ever given. "*Ye know not in what day* your Lord cometh." Matt. 24:43.

If, therefore, we could determine to the day, the successive termination of each of the great periods of Daniel's vision, it decides nothing as to "the coming of the Lord" in His relation to His Church, for this is not so much a subject of old Testament revelation, nor is the *time* made

Digitized by Google

known in the New. But the *times* of Daniel are specific, definite, and are ascertainable, not approximately but positively, nor is there any evidence that the Church has greatly erred in her computations.

If we take the French revolution as the first or earliest termination of any of the larger prophetic periods of Daniel, and follow down the series, we shall find correspondences, too marked to be regarded as mere coincidences, and their influence upon the Jew, in ameliorating his condition, in augmenting his privileges, and in lessening the rigor of his captivity, too manifest to be merely an accident of the time. While in each new development, and without any officiousness or representation on the part of the Jews, Palestine looms up as of increasing importance, until, from various causes, "the Eastern question" has become the problem of the world. It is now the strategic point in European politics.

In like manner, if we regard the first incipient and inchoate termination of the two thousand and three hundred days, to have embraced the period of nineteen years, commencing in A.D. 1820, we have the dismemberment of the Ottoman empire continued, until the five great powers of Europe interposed to save it from utter extinction, through the rebellion of Mehemet Ali, and his son, Ibrahim, Pachas of Egypt, in A.D. 1839, and ultimating in its virtual overthrow; since when, it has existed solely through foreign diplomacy and the national jealousies of the rival European powers, while, according to Lamartine, "Turkey is perishing for the want of Turks." Its life is prolonged "for a season and a time," certainly not in reference to the occupancy of her land by the Gentile Church, but on account of the Jew. "My people are at hand to come."

It ought to be mentioned in passing, that this period was designated, by different expositors, as the limitation of the Mohammedan power, and that Mr. Miller fixed the end of the Mohammedan horn, within a month of the storming of St. Jean d'Acre by the English fleet.

Various expositors, from different standpoints, have placed the fall of the Papal horn (we speak of the Papacy solely as a world-power), from 1843 to 1868, and the results have been alike answerable to prophecy. Since the Garibaldian revolution of 1847–8, until the present time, at different periods the Papacy has been shorn of her princely power and territorial domain, and has, till now, been defended from her own children by French bayonets. "But they will set down to hold judgment, and they will take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end." Dan. 7 : 26.

All this, however, has reference to the future world kingdom of our Lord, as Son of David, and has far more direct and positive relation to the Jew, and has tended more to the amelioration of his condition, than the positive advancement of the Christian Church. And in this we find a sufficient reason for the silence of prophecy, in relation to the reformation inaugurated by Luther and his compeers, so intimately connected with the best interests of the Church.

It is true Italy and Spain now enjoy an open Bible, and, in a good degree, a free Gospel; God will gather his own witnesses out from among them—"a remnant according to the election of grace;" but the great drama of prophecy is fast drawing to a close, and Gentile domination, and anti-Christian usurpation will soon give place to the world-kingdom of our Lord, in which the inheritance, that was made conditional under the Law, "to the children of the fourth generation," will be *confirmed*, and "the *Law* will be written in their hearts." "The kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the *people of the saints* of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. Dan. 7 : 27. Some time, and we believe before the expiration of the remaining Danielic periods, before the final overthrow of the Gentile powers, our Lord will come for His waiting Church, but "of that day and hour, knoweth no man." "Even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

But "*knowing the time*," and that the times of Daniel are *revealed times*, "the prophets

Digitized by Google

who prophesied of the grace now bestowed *on you*" (the parties addressed were Jews), "inquired and sought diligently; searching what, or *about what time*, the Spirit within them signified, which testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow." 1 Pet. 1 : 11. Giving then to chronological prophecy its proper place, let us search diligently, in order to ascertain how far the *time* which God has revealed for the accomplishment of his purposes of grace has been fulfilled.

The true position of the Christian Church, is that of a witness for God, which, because of the present rejection and dispersion of His covenant-related people, are a living sign, that His purposes of grace have not miscarried or failed; and for Jesus, as *the Christ*, in whom redemption shall be established and accomplished. Hence the declaration, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1 : 18. The Church is the *only* instrumentality that God has ordained upon earth, in the absence of the Jew, "to whom pertain the covenants" and "*the promises*," to make known the power and the coming, and the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom his own people, the Jews, rejected. And it is made the office of the holy communion, "to show the Lord's death till he come." 1 Cor. 11 : 26. Her inheritance is *heavenly*, and therefore she is separated from the world. Her testimony, therefore, is that of a third party, unto whom "the kings of the earth" do well to listen, and to receive instruction. She is not to covet earthly things, and consequently in the world-kingdom which pertains to the Jew, she has no share, but as an heir with Christ in resurrection glory. When her testimony is accomplished, her Lord, will receive her to himself; and then will be manifested the kingdom, long promised, ardently prayed for, and earnestly desired by the groaning creation—the theme of inspired song, and prophetic delineation, and joyous anticipation.

Prophetic times, therefore, belong *not* to the Gentile Church, as her inheritance; she simply *witnesseth*, and should impart *hope* to the dispersed of Israel until her Lord receives her to himself. But when the seven times of Moses are accomplished, in Jacob's punishment, and the periods of Gentile domination have run their cruel round, then will come the time of Jacob's deliverance, and the manifestation of the kingdom under the sceptre of the house of David, and earth shall celebrate her Jubilee.

This is all predicated upon revealed time, and forms a legitimate theme for inquiry and research. "It is certain and will not lie." But should the Church, or any portion of the Church, assume an inheritance in that which pertains to the Jew, she becomes herself an *Antichrist* and a *deceiver*.

SHINING AS THE SUN.

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."—MATT. 13 : 43.

THIS concluding verse of our Lord's exposition of the parable of the wheat and the tares, in connection with its preceding context, is a sufficiently explicit declaration that the full effulgence of righteousness cannot be manifested under the disadvantageous circumstances of this dark dispensation. But, all these obstacles removed, and the wheat freed from the influence of tares, then shall the righteous shine with the glory of the meridian sun in that kingdom of purity and light, which is now in process of preparation.

There is no mistaking the teachings of this parable, for we have the blessed Saviour's own minute exposition, clothed in a simplicity of language that forbids all wresting and distortion. It alone is sufficient to refute the hypothesis of the universal conversion of the world by present instrumentalities, and the consequent bringing in of the millennial era without the personal presence of him, whose irradiating glory is to eclipse all other luminaries, and drive away all darkness. He distinctly tells us that the tares must *grow* until the harvest; they will not be eradicated by the potency of Gospel truth, or the brilliancy and beauty of godly example,—no—they will *flourish*, possess the greatness, riches, honors of this, *their own kingdom*, looking with scorn and contempt upon the feeble minority of golden wheat. "They have their portion in this life,"

Digitized by Google

and they cannot be dispossessed; a merciful God in view of their ultimate condition of wretchedness and shame, the result of their own deliberate choice, allows them to possess the very best this world has to offer in its fallen and unredeemed state. They must *both* grow together until the harvest; but the growth of the wheat is of such a kind, that its outward progress is not always perceptible, and will only reach its maturity when these depressing circumstances shall be changed.

The wheat have no reason to expect, so far as their connection with this world is concerned, anything but an existence of obscurity, and of mere toleration from the tares, whose rank luxuriance indeed almost causes the apprehension of a complete smothering of them. But the Lord of the harvest has said that the reapers will be sent to make the final separation, and that *then* shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. Whilst the power, the success, and the pleasures of this world are in the hands of the tares, the recognized adherents of its present prince and proprietor, and the enemies of Him who is to dethrone the usurper and establish His own supremacy, how *can* there be a millennium resulting from an equal distribution of blessings, holiness, and peace! When the lawful Sovereign's own subjects are so fearfully in the minority; banished from places of trust, power, and honor, which are usually the rewards of faithful followers, and in the wilderness mourn in sackcloth till their Deliverer shall come from that "far country" to assert His claims and establish his kingdom, how can there be any blessedness or joy for them? Is there the smallest intimation of their elevation, and the subjugation of the tares? Are they not rather taught that the servant must not be above his Lord? And this is not simply the case of the individual Christian, but of the Church in the aggregate, as is shown by the representations of her depressed and widowed condition, and of her retirement into the wilderness during her Lord's absence. Does not ecclesiastical history show that such has ever been the state of the true Church? Is not the little flock of Christ's true followers of the present day, the only Church that He will recognize, almost totally concealed from view by the great mass of formal pretenders? Are they not to a considerable extent the objects of scorn and persecution? Is not their example derided, and their admonitions and entreaties disregarded? Do they exercise any controlling influence? Do they not rather feel that they are hopelessly in the minority, and helpless in their efforts? "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

Christians have been forewarned that their whole earthly career must be a participation in Christ's sufferings, a drinking of His cup; but they have also been assured for their consolation, that this same world, which must ever be their enemy, as it is that of their Master, is doomed. Their hour of glorious triumph is to come. The rosy light is gleaming now over the distant hills, and the exiles may lift up their heads, as their redemption is drawing nigh. But in the intervening gloom, whilst their horizon is overshadowed by clouds from Satan's opened pit, and their hearts depressed by the unkindness of his auxiliaries, they must testify against in sackcloth and tears, rewarded with but very faint success. And so it must ever be until the harvest; Christ shows us that there can be no improvement until then; but "then *shall* the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

They shall shine as the sun, not as a meteor, with its fluctuating, evanescent glare, illuminating with a flash a limited locality, and then suddenly sinking in darkness forever—fit emblem of the ephemeral prosperity of the tares, so soon succeeded by the midnight of eternal death—but *as the sun*, whose steady, brilliant beams of golden light diffuse health, joy, and beauty over all the world, and whose perpetuity is promised even as that of the earth itself. "The wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Daniel 12: 3. An immortality of happiness, holiness, and dazzling glory is secured to them. "They shall shine as the sun;" "as the stars *forever and ever.*" He that is faithful until death, or until the coming of the Lord, shall have a crown

Digitized by Google

of life. He that overcometh shall have power over the nations, and shall rule them with a rod of iron. And some special prerogative they are to receive in the gift of the morning star. May they not well be satisfied to wait until then? Not only happiness and peace are bestowed; not only a radiant course of glory, but elevation over all that here depressed them; power over the nations, and a copartnership in the sovereignty of the world. Need they envy the meteor blaze of the tares?

Why are such glories, honors, and happiness bestowed upon them? Why do some of Christ's children receive honors and others not? Not because their superior merits entitle them to reward, but some were content to be barely saved, and Christ rewards devotion to Himself, for His glory's sake alone, with His highest approbation. They labored more abundantly for His holy name and cause, instant in season and out of season, they counted not their lives dear unto themselves, that they might finish their course with joy. They were *wise*, and therefore they shall shine as the brightness of the firmament. They esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, having respect unto the recompense of the reward.

The tares coveted the treasures of Egypt above all things, and those not fully consecrated to Christ were willing to participate in these riches and aggrandizements. Christ was good, but material splendor and wealth were not to be despised, and so their affections were divided between the two. Too intent upon the pursuit of worldly good, He was not to them the chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. They loved Him, but not with their heart, and soul, and strength, and mind. They followed Him, but alas! afar off. Their brethren were wise, and preferred enjoying their good things in their proper season. They could not see their Lord's anguish, and not partake thereof. They could not see Him dethroned, and make obsequious court to the usurper; nor engage in festal scenes and hilarity whilst He tarried in a far country, and the wrongs received from His enemies yet unrequited. They were *wise;* they suffered with Him, and so they shall reign with Him. Is not this in keeping with our own ideas of justice? Not because any *merit* reward; for nothing that we can do will repay the obligations received; but their whole hearts and souls, and bodies were the Lord's, and He delights to make them ruler over all His goods.

They turned many to righteousness, and so they shall shine as the stars forever and ever. Not selfishly content to be saved themselves, they had an intense desire that all shall escape the wrath to come, and participate in the immortal joys of the everlasting kingdom. They burned with zeal to effect this object, and their practical efforts were directed to this end. God had respect to these desires by making them efficient instruments in turning many to righteousness; for those who honor Him, He delights to honor. A selfishness that reached the height of indifference as to the eternal perdition of a human being was what they could not understand. They felt a most solemn and awful sense of responsibility, as they realized that God had constituted them their brother's keeper, and that his blood would be required at their hands. Less than nothing in themselves, they yet felt that they could do all things through Christ's strengthening them. They availed themselves of every opportunity, and relaxed no efforts for the furtherance of their object, looking ever to the omnipotent One for aid, and they meet with abundant success. And so when the Lord makes up the jewels of His royal crown, they shine with a glittering intensity that rivals the sun and the stars, inferior only to the effulgent beams of the Sun of righteousness Himself. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." 1 John 3: 2. As we have this blessed hope in us, let us purify ourselves even as He is pure.

In the kingdom of their Father. Obscure, despised, dwelling in shadows and gloom in the usurper's kingdom, they now shine with glory in their Father's kingdom. What a transition! Every craving of their immortal nature is now satisfied—completely satisfied. Accustomed alone to sorrow, self-denial, and trial, only the transformation of the corruptible

Digitized by Google

to the incorruptible can enable them to bear the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Their grateful, joyous song is ever now unto Him that loved them and washed them from their sins in His own blood.

This kingdom contains all the elements of holiness and happiness within itself, and consequently complete peace and satisfaction must ever be their portion. They shall no longer mourn the sins and infirmities of their mortal natures, nor be subjected to involuntary contact and association with the irreclaimably wicked, —for He shall gather out of His kingdom all things that do offend and that work iniquity. What a cross was it for the comparatively pure to be subjected to the companionship of the impure—often of their own households, and from whose unholy influence they could not entirely escape. How often had their best efforts and plans been impeded and frustrated by circumstances arising from this association; and one of the sweetest hopes in connection with their Father's kingdom, had been that of constant companionship with the pure and holy. They have felt that no material pains of hell could be more unendurable than an eternity of commixture with the vicious.

Their sensibilities shall no more be excited by physical suffering and mental agony, which they feel their inability to relieve. None there shall hunger more, nor thirst, nor sun nor heat affect them more. The Lamb shall feed them, and God shall wipe all tears from their eyes. Their sympathetic feelings shall only be excited for those that do rejoice; and for themselves will only be joy and gladness—thanksgiving and the voice of melody. They shall see no more traces of crime, suffering, sin, and all the varied forms of human misery that have so excited their commiseration, and given them so keen a sense of their own impotence. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him."

The material nature of this kingdom will be such as to gratify all our finer feelings and perceptions. Beauty, symmetry, grace, and elegance, will abound on every hand. That sinless love for the beautiful, so fondly cherished, and which is one evidence of our divine original, shall be satisfied to its utmost capacity. This love of beauty in nature and art, which has so refining and purifying an influence here, elevating us above the grosser feelings of humanity, even when it is allied with so much that is contaminating, and so many counteracting feelings in conflict, what will be its effect when it is purified from all these, and when it has immortal grace and beauty to excite its emotion?

Of course such gratification will be inferior to that afforded the more spiritual part of our nature; but it is an evidence that everything sinless in our purified organism shall be completely satisfied. When we read the delineations of the exquisite beauty of the New Jerusalem, whether the language be literal or figurative, we realize that God has prepared a metropolis for His kingdom quite worthy of His glory and majesty; and wonder at His condescension in admitting children of Adam's race therein. But He has promised that even such shall rejoice in that beautiful jasper light, clear as crystal. That arrayed in the pure and spotless robes of Christ's all-sufficient righteousness, even the gates of pearl, emblazoned with their many-tinted jewels, shall admit us to the golden streets, sparkling like transparent glass. That city's immutable foundations shall stand forever, and lighted by the glory of God and the Lamb, we shall rejoice in that light, and go no more out. "Wherefore, comfort ye one another with these words."

M. E. S.

COMING SUDDENLY.

"Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping."—MARK 13: 35, 36.

WHEN Christ comes again to this earth, the announcement of His approach will be as sudden and unexpected to the great mass of the world, as was the sweeping deluge in the days of Noah. So callous will men have become through the "cares of this life," and the nonfulfilment of foolish predictions, that, even the

Digitized by Google

day before, there will perhaps be less faith in the Saviour's coming than there was one hundred years ago.

It was sudden and unexpected when God rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed the "cities of the plain." None of the inhabitants, save righteous Lot, were fully apprised of the fact the evening before. Suddenly and unexpectedly in the days of Belshazzar, did the handwriting appear on the wall, foretelling the doom of that proud monarch, and the overthrow of the Babylonish kingdom. It was sudden and unexpected when the Passover-Angel took his solemn and awful flight over the land, when he smote all the first-born of Egypt, from the first-born of the captive in the dungeon, to the first-born of the king on his throne. It was sudden and unexpected when the waters returned and swamped the proud hosts of Pharaoh in the Red Sea. "They sank as lead in the mighty waters." It was sudden and unexpected, when the angel of the Lord unveiled his mighty power in the destruction of the grand army of Sennacherib. One hundred and eighty-five thousand lay dead in the morning. Suddenly and unexpectedly did the army of Titus withdraw from encamping around Jerusalem, which was the sign given by the Saviour to His followers to flee from the city, as that portended its speedy overthrow.

It is our duty therefore, as Christians, to study Prophecy and observe the "signs of the times," lest the day of the Lord come upon us unawares: "for as a snare shall it come upon all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth." (Luke 21:35.)

At the time of the First Advent, there was a general expectation amongst the Jews that the Messiah was about to appear. Likewise also, in these last days, there is, at this moment, a generally concurrent opinion amongst prophetic writers throughout the world, that the grand crisis of the Lord's Second Advent is close at hand. S. R.

WATCH! 'tis your Lord's command;
And while we speak, He's near;
Mark the first signal of His hand,
And ready all appear.

THE END IS NEAR.

CLOUDS of darkness gathering o'er us,
Awful tidings with them bear;
Scenes of misery spread before us—
Death, and pestilence, and war;
All in one loud, piercing chorus,
Tell us that *the end is near.*

Hearts of men within them failing,
For the coming woes they fear;
All their efforts unavailing—
No propitious signs appear;
Sin increasing—crime prevailing,
Tell us that *the end is near.*

Selfishness in all abounding;
Gold the idol everywhere,
Worshipp'd by a host, confounding
Gold for all that's good or fair;
Crowds the mammon-god surrounding,
Tell us that *the end is near.*

Formal godliness increasing,
Power denied, and forms held dear;
Christ and fashion coalescing,
Forming now the character;
Rites so popular and pleasing,
Tell us that *the end is near.*

Lawlessness so vastly spreading,
Void of reverence, awe, or fear;
Sacred things beneath it treading,
Stamped with God's own signature;
Never once his vengeance dreading,
Tell us that *the end is near.*

War, that heaviest curse of nations,
Running on its dread career;
While the mass its desolations
Listless, or applauding, hear;
War, with its abominations,
Tell us that *the end is near.*

Saints of God all evil hating,
Faithful to the name they bear
For their coming Saviour waiting,
To be caught up in the air,
Hence their rest and blessing dating,
Tell us that *the end is near.*

Sinner, wouldst thou in the glory
Of that "cloudless morning" share?
Wouldst thou have *this* hope before thee?
Wear the crown saints then will wear?
Oh! believe redemption's story;
Look to Christ! *the end is near.*

Let not earth, thy thoughts engrossing,
Cheat thee of that portion fair!
Look to Christ! on *him* reposing,
Thou shalt happy be, nor fear!
Sinner, haste! the day is closing;
Look to Christ! *the end is near.*

Digitized by Google

ISRAEL RESTORED.

MOUNTAINS of Israel, rear on high
Your summits, crowned with verdure new,
And spread your branches to the sky,
Refulgent with celestial dew.
O'er Jordan's stream or gentle flow,
And Judah's peaceful valleys smile,
And far reflect the lovely glow,
Where ocean's waves incessant toil.

See where the scattered tribes return,—
Their slavery is gone at length;
And purer flames to Jesus burn.
And Zion girds on her new strength.
New cities bloom along the plain,
New temples to Jehovah rise;
The kindling voice of praise again
Pours its sweet anthems to the skies.

The fruitful fields again are blest,
And yellow harvest smiles around
Sweet scenes of heavenly joy and rest,
Where peace and innocence are found.
The bloody sacrifice no more
Shall smoke upon the altars high,
But ardent hearts, from hill to shore,
Send grateful incense to the sky.

The Jubilee of man is near,
When earth, as heaven, shall own his reign.
He comes to wipe the mourner's tear,
And cleanse the heart from sin and pain.
Praise Him, ye tribes of Israel, praise
The King who ransomed you from woe;
Nations the hymn of triumph raise,
And bid the song of rapture flow.

J. L. H.

Selections.

FANATICISM AND INFIDELITY

NO FRUIT OF OUR DOCTRINE.

IT has been said, that the expectation of the speedy advent of Christ has produced, and is likely still to produce, fanaticism in its worst forms, *and afterwards to result in infidelity.*

This is surely a very unfortunate objection, as it, if valid, is an objection both to His coming itself, and to the belief of it. It is virtually an arraignment, therefore, of His making known to men His purpose to come in the clouds of heaven to judge them, and assign them endless awards; for, if true, the expectation of His advent, when it approaches, and is known to be at hand, must necessarily drive men to fanaticism and unbelief. We are surprised that the wary authors of this objection should not have glanced in this direction, and seen the bearing of their remarks on the whole doctrine and purpose of Christ's coming.

People are undoubtedly mistaken in supposing that the belief in Christ's speedy coming has a necessary or natural adaptation to lead either the people of God or others to fanaticism and infidelity. It is false notions of Him and the end for which He is to come, and a want of love, submission, and trust, that lead to such effects; not just views, not the truth itself respecting Him and the design with which He comes, as it is presented in the Scriptures. A just understanding, deep realizations of the advent and the great events that are to follow, and a vivid faith, will impress the heart with awe and humbleness, a sense of its responsibility, watchfulness against sin, love and gratitude at the graciousness of His designs, wonder and admiration at the grandeur of the displays he is to make of His power and grace in the resurrection of the holy dead to glory and immortality, joy at the prospect of deliverance from sin and admission to His kingdom, and exhilaration and gratitude at the extrication of the world from the thraldom of evil. These are the sentiments with which the Christians of the first age contemplated the coming of Christ which they thought nigh; they were exhorted to look forward to it with earnest expectation; and it is exhibited as a mark of their intelligent faith and genuine love that they anticipated and waited for it, as to bring the consummation of their redemption. "The grace of God that brought salvation, taught them to look for that blessed hope, the glorious appearance of the great God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, as much as it taught them to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." Tit. 2: 11–13. And it was to "all them that love His appearing, that the promise was made of a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give at that day." 2 Tim. 4: 8. And under a sense of its immeasurable glory

Digitized by Google

to God and joyfulness to the world, the apostle prayed that its distance might be diminished, not increased. "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." And such is the natural effect of the anticipation of it, when contemplated aright on all sanctified minds.

Why should the belief of Christ's speedy coming drive men to fanaticism any more than the expectation does of a speedy summons to His presence by death? The children of God are not driven to wild and fanatical notions and false affections as death approaches, by the certainty that in a few days or hours they shall be borne through the dark valley into Christ's immediate presence, behold Him in His glory, meet His face, hear the accents of forgiveness and acceptance from His gracious lips, and be raised to the spotlessness, wisdom, and bliss of His kingdom. So far from it, their last hours are generally marked much in proportion to the justness and clearness of their views, by calmness and joy, a steadfastness and serenity of faith, a sublimity of hope and peace that are known at no other period, and that prepare them for transition to the cloudless light and raptured bliss to which they immediately pass. That hour is of much the same moment to them that the time of Christ's coming will be to those of His disciples who are then living on the earth; the disclosures that are made to them are as vast and wonderful as those that will be made to the living at His advent; and the destinies that are determined to them as great and momentous.

Just views then, of the coming of the Redeemer, however near it may be thought to be, instead of exciting men to fanaticism and infidelity, will restrain them from them, and impress them with awe, humbleness, and watchfulness, and prompt them,—if believers—to love, gratitude, adoration, submission, joy.

Nor are those of the present day who regard Christ's coming as at hand, led by their expectation of it to fanaticism. There is, as far as we know, no body of evangelical believers more sedate, more under the legitimate influence of the great truths of the Gospel, more fixed in their principles, more devoted to Christ, and more active in the discharge of their domestic and social duties, than the Millenarians of this country. The fanaticism of some, a few years ago, was not the consequence of a belief in the scriptural doctrine of Christ's coming, but the effect of false notions, and of the arts probably, in a measure, of false teachers, who studied by misrepresentation and appeals to the natural passions, to drive their followers to violent excitement; and the number who became the victims of delusion was but small, compared with the whole body of believers in Christ's premillennial coming. Those who were led by the disappointment of their expectations into infidelity, of course cannot have been genuine believers in Christ, and they were led to their formal rejection of revelation, not by the scriptural doctrine of Christ's second coming, but by their misconceptions and false notions of it. The effects of their misconceiving and perverting the truth are no more to be charged to the truth itself, than the errors that prevail in respect to the scriptural doctrine of justification by faith in the blood of Christ, are to be regarded as natural and necessary effects of that doctrine, and proofs that it ought not to be received.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

THE *personal* reference of "the Lord's Prayer" is acknowledged by all: its *prophetic* aspect is but seldom considered. So far as it bears upon ourselves, either in regard to comfort or duty, it is well studied and understood; but its application to the Son of God, alike in his present dominion and final empire, is nearly forgotten.

Nevertheless, "the Lord's Prayer" has both an interior and a more obvious meaning; and if it breathes the consciousness of an individual Believer, it also embodies the assurance of the collected Church. Its simple petitions are easily uttered—its emphatic pleas deeply felt even by childhood and youth; whilst the man of ripest experience never reaches the age when he can lay it aside. Yet it is not more the cry of Want, than the exultation of Hope, striking above the clouds of time, and plunging amid the sunshine it sees prepared for earth.

In this light, then, let us view this portion

Digitized by Google

of our Lord's teaching, and thus restore to use, both in its petitions and in its pleas, as a prophecy for the Church, what we have long recognized as a prayer for the Believer.

First of all, let us advert to *the petitions* we find in the Lord's Prayer, and consider them in their reference, both to the World at large, and the Believer himself.

The idea which has obtained most currency touching this world's future is, that things are better than they were, and that by existing agencies and means we shall see the Gospel prevail over the Jews, and complete the fulness of the Gentiles; when the wilderness shall blossom as the rose, and its fruit shake like Lebanon.

There is, however, another view regarding the prospective history of earth, and it is—that things are worse instead of better, and that in spite of known appearances, the world departs still further from God, until the King of righteousness come, to purify all things by the fire of judgment, and establish them in rest under the shadow of his throne.

It is the latter of these two views which is sanctioned by that prayer "our Lord taught his disciples"—holding out, as it does, very glorious hopes for our world, yet connecting all with the kingdom of which *heaven* is the model—*the Father*, the origin—and *Jesus Christ*, the prince.

It is Jesus and his Church who lift up this prayer we call "the Lord's Prayer;" and they cry "*our*" "*us*" as one real, living, and imperishable body. They enter within the veil—they stand before the throne—they besiege the ear of the Most High: but it is not as potentate, it is as parent they recognize God. "*Our Father!*" is the exclamation that breaks from their lips, ere they fall upon the knees of intercession. It cost the Son of God incarnation, and shame, and death upon the cross, ere he could bring his chosen back to their Father's house and to their Father's bosom. But now He and they are one; and as God is a Father to all *in heaven*, as God is a Father to *the Son himself*, so is he a Father to all the ransomed. *Our Father!* Our Father *in heaven!* The idea is this,—How bright those mansions are, and those hosts how blessed, encircled by the fatherhood of God! and *this* God is *our* God! The believer, then, enters the presence of God with the brightness of *heaven* beaming on his eye, with the blessedness of *heaven* breathing through his soul. He stands before the throne, rejoicing without a fear in God reconciled to him as a Father by the Lord.

But thus glad above all measure in God, contemplated as Father, the believer's first petition is, "*Hallowed be this name of thine!*"

It is not enough that *heaven* knows the blessedness of the name *Father* as applied to God, and that *Christ* knows it too. The cry of Jesus and his Church is, that without restriction *this name* be proclaimed among all the sons of men, and God invested with new holiness and majesty, in being recognized as not more the Father of heaven than the Father of earth.

Had the designation of God, at the outset of this prayer, been *Jehovah* or *Almighty*, it would have furnished us with no means of ascertaining the precise object that the petition aimed at. But *Father in heaven* at once represents the relation which God sustains to the host above, and in this manner defines the longing of the Church for this miserable world. Filled with the love of God themselves, the suppliants now waiting at the throne will rest satisfied with nothing short of *this*, that the same love, flowing from the same source, may reach to all, and that once more God may bear to men as well as angels the relation of a *Father*.

Rightly understood, it is even *this* that the Church, in unison with the Son of God, longs for in behalf of our fallen race when using the petition, "*Hallowed be this name of thine!*" and such a longing carries in it the earnest hope and desire of "restitution." Men are orphans until they are reunited to God in Jesus Christ,—nay, they are "the children of the wicked one." But the utterance of this cry, when taught the disciples at the beginning, was the bud of life; and it will not cease to expand and swell till it yields the harvest it is destined to produce. What Jesus asked, the Father will grant; and the star that wandered so long from its orbit will climb again to its firmament.

Digitized by Google

The prodigal who has spent all his living in exile and sin will return to his home. Man, the outcast and the outlaw, will anew learn to call God *Father;* and calling man *a son*, God will fold him to his bosom with boundless delight.

Here, then, is the calling of the elect through the grace of the Spirit; and if this be God's eventual purpose regarding the fallen, we ought to cherish the same design; and no greater joy ought we to have than in showing God to all with the bowels of a father yearning under the robes of a judge.

We are in a world where very few know their Father; and surely, if we ourselves have found him, our wish should be that all who breathe the same air may enjoy him with us. We ought indeed to feel as if we had no other thing to do on earth than publish his name, that we may commend his grace. We cannot make the poor man rich, or deliver the dying from death. But if we are abiding in the consciousness that God is our Father, we can tell others what we have found; and in helping weary souls to say "*Father*," we move upon the face of the troubled deep, and divide the light from the darkness.

But if Jesus and his Church long for *every soul* entering on the enjoyment of God as Father, with equal ardor do they long for blessing to the *whole earth*, in all its aspects; for their second petition is, "*Thy kingdom come*," and this points to the assimilation of earth to heaven, or the reign of peace at the coming of Jesus Christ.

In asking, "*Hallowed be thy name*," we simply plead that God may be accepted by *each individual* as a Father, so that all who have groaned under sin may find rest in Him who made them. But when we ask, "*Thy kingdom come*," we plead that all who have returned to God may receive the inheritance which has been promised, and which will manifest the character of God as *Father*, at the same time that it fulfils our hopes as *heirs*.

The answer of the Westminster Catechism to the question, "What do we pray for in the second petition?" is to the following effect: "We pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it." But, in the first place, the expression, "*Kingdom of grace*," let me remark, though it may be allowed, is not found in Scripture. And, in the second place, to represent this petition as a petition for ourselves, in the character of sinners pleading for mercy, quite destroys the import of the prayer, and is wholly inconsistent with the standing of the petitioners.

"*Thy kingdom come*" is beyond all doubt the prayer, not of them who are "without," but of them who are "called;" it is the prayer of those who themselves are subject to God, and who desire that all would yield to the same sceptre: it is the prayer of the redeemed Church, but not less the prayer of their redeeming Head. And their cry is in behalf of those who have not yet left the ways of rebellion.

For the most part, indeed, the terms, "*Kingdom of God*," and "*Kingdom of heaven*," are set down as meaning the effusion of God's Spirit on all flesh, and his reign within the heart. But though perhaps legitimate as an accommodation, it must be obvious that such a view does not exhaust the import of the symbol. For not only does "the kingdom" *within the soul* "come" as often as the Spirit converts and renews, whilst "the kingdom" of the petition we are now considering is all "*to come;*" but this latter "kingdom" is *on the earth*, for in a subsequent clause we ask that "the will of God may be done *on earth*, even as in heaven."

"*The Kingdom*" of our Lord, then, is a kingdom *without us;* and though it be certain, as yet it is future. Renewed souls do form a part of it, and are its pledge and earnest. But its *scope* is wider than this, and embraces within it all the creation of earth. Men speak of the kingdom of providence, and of the kingdom of grace, and of the kingdom of glory, and say that we should plead for "the coming" of all these. But our petition speaks of "a kingdom," not of "kingdoms;" and when it adds, "*Thy* kingdom," it does as much as intimate that it is "a kingdom" of which no one who knows the Father ought to be ignorant. "*Thy*

Digitized by Google

kingdom," says Christ to the Father, regarding which we have so often communed. "*Thy* kingdom," which thou hast shown to me in thy Word, O God! says the believer. "*The kingdom*" mentioned by our Lord is a well-defined kingdom, and a well-known kingdom. It is not any kingdom which men may describe; it is not any kingdom which men may wish: it is not any kingdom which men may fancy: but it is "*the kingdom*" which the Father calls his, and which the Son ascribes to the Father. It is just "*the kingdom*" which is referred to throughout all the Scriptures; and if we would be rightly taught concerning it, let us inquire what prophets, and apostles, and Christ himself declared.

"*Behold!*" says Jeremiah, "*the days come that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.*" Here are the characteristics of all kingdoms,—a ruler on the one hand, and subjects on the other; or, visible government, and visible subjection. But Daniel is more express; for after describing four *literal* kingdoms, he introduces *Christ's kingdom* as succeeding to these, just that we might feel compelled to attach the same palpable character to both. "*In the days*," he writes, "*of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and it shall break in pieces all these kingdoms, and stand forever.*" Or, let us consult the New Testament, and we shall find the same truth announced in the same terms. For did not the angels tell Mary—"*The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end?*" And alluding to himself, does not Jesus say: "*A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom and return?*" Finally, we read in Paul—"*Then, the end, when he shall hand over the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all government, and all authority, and power. For he must reign until he have put all the enemies under his feet.*"

Such is "the kingdom" to which all Old Testament Scripture exclusively points, and of which alone the apostles of Christ would think. *This*, therefore, is "the kingdom" meant by our Lord, even "the kingdom" which every ancient prophet sung, and for which every ancient believer sighed; "the kingdom" which embraces the whole extent of earth, and covers it with fruitfulness and joy; "the kingdom" which has Jesus for its king, and where, with him, his saints shall reign.

As yet, Satan is prince of this world, and he claims our earth as his territory. But the old Serpent will shortly be coiled up in the pit, and then Satan's kingdom becomes the kingdom of God. As yet, nothing meets the eye, save ignorance, and ambition, and misrule. But when Jesus shall hand over the kingdom to the Father, all men shall be free, and walk in the light of truth. As yet, our world is in arms against Him on whose arm it hangs. But in the days of the kingdom, all shall be obedience, and love, and honor. As yet, the Man of Sin usurps the name, and prerogatives, and homage of the Son of God; and idolatry and superstition flourish too. But when Jesus reigns, his enemies shall lie down at his feet, and kiss the dust in seeming loyalty. As yet, there is no rest for earth, no favor for the Church, no glory for our Master. But let the kingdom come; and how bright the change! Jesus is "the name above every name," and all worship him in lowliness and love. The Church has thrown off her sackcloth and sits as queen. And "one calm and blossomed spring" breathes away the cold, and storms, and pining barrenness of earth.

But if *this* be "the kingdom to come," it will be only in accordance with the mind of Jesus to think oft about it, and hasten it on its way. Had we been with the Man of Sorrows as he lingered on the shores of Galilee, or climbed its hills; could we have watched the sighs which rose from his lips, and listened to his accents of intercession, *this* would we have found was his prayer at morning, noon, and night—even "Thy kingdom come!" And were we with Jesus where he now is, even amid the hosts of light, and at his Father's right hand, we still

Digitized by Google

should hear this same petition, "Thy kingdom come," ascending from his lips.

Did Jesus, however, thus pray in the days of his flesh, and shall not we? Is Jesus thus pleading still within the veil, and shall not all his saints? We pray, "Hallowed be thy name as Father;" and in this petition ask that all men may be redeemed. But "Thy kingdom come," is a petition of wider scope. It takes in the earth itself—and for this let us supplicate as Jesus has taught us, and as Jesus did.

At the same time, the coming of the kingdom must always be connected with the coming of the King; and we need no more expect the one without the other, than a temple without an architect. Oppressed nations rise up in the strength of manhood to claim the rights of freedom; the leviathan of oppressors, in the person of Nicholas, is suddenly brought down by a tyrant more inexorable than himself, and we are fond to think that the battle is over. But without the Peacemaker there cannot be peace. Stress is laid upon political reforms, and philanthropic efforts, and educational progress, and the preaching of the Word. And these are all blessings—blessings to be hailed and multiplied. Yet they do not bring in, nor even bring on "the kingdom," for where is the King? This world is wretched; and if we can arrest a single groan, or wipe away a tear, we are honored. But *He* who will "scatter all evil with his eyes," and usher in the rest of earth—He who will build up creation from its ruins, and leave no spot or wrinkle on its garments, is even He who hung upon the cross; and if we would advance "the coming of the kingdom," we must link it with the coming of the King.

With exact dates we pretend to no familiarity; and how near or how distant, therefore, that consummation is, we cannot affirm. Earth may ofttimes be filled with sinners, and emptied into the deep abyss of wrath, ere the mystery of its ungodliness is finished. Or, even now, the Deliverer may be standing on the shore, ready to tread the waves of our Gennesareth into millennial peace, under the feet of his love.

Yet even this shall not be the culminating point of grace; but the next petition rises in its longing above those we have already noticed. "Hallowed be thy name, O God! as Father," is the first longing of Jesus and his Church; and it unfolds the prospect of grace bringing back *mankind* through all its tribes to God, under the Spirit. "Thy kingdom come," is the next longing of Jesus and his Church; and it opens up the prospect of grace triumphant over *the earth itself*, in all its extent, under Christ. But now "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth," is the final longing of Jesus and his Church; and it discloses the prospect of *this world*, in all its tribes, and in all its extent, turned into the counterpart of heaven, in spite of all resistance, under the Father.

From the beginning, God had a counsel—a purpose—"*a will*," regarding heaven; and he meant that it should ever be a region of purity and bliss. Not only was he the Potentate of the family which dwelt there, reigning over them in power; he was their Father too, and all were knit together in the bonds of kindliest love. "Heaven" was a scene of cloudless beauty and uninterrupted joy. No sin was there, and no curse; no discord was there, and no sorrow; no confusion was there, and no alarm. Walk forth upon the streets of "heaven," and every citizen you meet is robed in festive "white." Traverse the plains of "heaven," and nothing is to be seen but fairest loveliness. Mingle with the hosts of "heaven," and hallelujah breaks from every lip. Spend ages in "heaven," and still God and his armies are but as a father and his children—rejoicing together without suspicion or pause.

Nevertheless, "*the will*" of God in "heaven," as now described, was set at defiance and put aside. Pride entered—rebellion followed—and war arose.

But the creature proved not strong enough to wrest the sceptre from the Creator's hands; and though abruptly checked for a little space, "the will of God" resumed its course. The disturber is cast out, and the tumult hushed. Danger, and the fear of danger, are exchanged for the calm of invincible security. The bands of love are knit more closely than before; and God is once more, not only the resistless Monarch, but the kind and happy Father. The

Digitized by Google

counsel of Jehovah prevails over the confederacy of devils, and "*his will is again accomplished in heaven.*"

God, however, had "a will" respecting *earth*, as well as *heaven;* and the will of God touching the former, even as with regard to the latter, was a will of Love not less than of Power —the will, not only of a Potentate, but of a Father.

When first, accordingly, it was placed in the firmament, *earth* was so pure and bright, that every star hailed it with a shout of wonder and of welcome; and the very angels felt that never as yet had God brought into existence anything so glorious. Oh! how kind, yet gentle, was every beam that issued from the sun! How full and placid and shining were the rivers which poured through every vale! How rich and fragrant and picturesque were the boundless plains, teeming with all that was needed for man or for beast! How fixed and majestic were the everlasting hills—no rent along their gentle slopes—no cloud upon their summits! How sweet to walk abroad amid the mild effulgence of the day, or when the moon was shedding her silver on stream and mountain side! How gladdening to look at the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air, and see nought but harmony and joyousness through all their innumerable ranks! Above all—how glorious was Man! fresh from his Maker's hands, stamped with God on every lineament—ruling all that had life—rejoicing with unbounded delight in Him from whom all being came, and still inhaling more of God, and communing more with God, each successive moment!

Ah! *this* was "*the will*" of God in respect of earth, and it was the will of a Father. It was the will of Love; and the divine purpose was, that earth should be as heaven.

But this "will" was assailed and arrested. Cast out of heaven, Satan made his way to earth—resolved to accomplish *here* what he did not succeed in effecting *there*. And for a season it seemed as if he would overcome. Temptation prevails—sin rushes in—the curse is denounced, and God's enemy claims mankind as his vassals, earth for his province. What a change!—a change above, beneath, around!—a change on man and beast, on mountain and river, on sky and plain, on day and night, on all that breathes, and on all that exists! The curse is over all! And you can trace it in the barren soil, which will scarce return an increase. You can discern it in the quenched and languid sunshine. You can follow it in the tempest, scattering ruin over all its course. You can hear it in the bitter groans of creation always in travail. And you can read it in the guilt and wretchedness of man. Everything proclaims that "the will" of God has been sadly infringed, and that he has ceased to be our "Father."

Nevertheless, though opposed, "the will of God as Father of earth" has not been frustrated; and eventually what God designed for "earth" in his love, shall be as truly brought to pass as what in his love he accomplished for "heaven." "As in heaven, so on earth, his will shall be done." In the case of "heaven," it needed only that God should put forth his strength, and the impeded current of "his will" went forward as of old. But in the case of "earth" it was different; and without shedding of blood, "the will of God" could not return to its channel. The atonment of Christ, however, laid the basis of our world's regeneration, and most precise and emphatic, accordingly, is the testimony of Holy Writ to the eventual assimilation of earth to heaven; for we read, "that in the fulness of time, he might gather together in one all things through Christ, those in the heavens, and those upon the earth"—"of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." "And having made peace"—that is, the Father —"through the blood of the Cross, even of his Son, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens."

Long after the conquest of India, the laws, and manners, and religion of that vast continent remained as they were when we took possession; and though both the parent country and the colonial province owned the same sceptre, how little had they in common! Still a change has been going forward over all the breadth of Hindostan, and one great shock of political convulsion may consummate the pro-

Digitized by Google

cess far sooner than we calculate—obliterating all dissimilarity, and uniting into *one kingdom* what are even now united under *one king*. But even thus it may be with earth and heaven! Already is this "earth" under the rule of Him who, in token of the empire he was to win by his cross, there wore a crown of thorns; yet it remains not vastly different from what it appeared when the first blast of the curse howled through the trees of Paradise, and evil abounds over the good. A change, however, has been advancing from the day that the cherubim of Eden predicted and prefigured a renewed alliance between heaven and earth; and God's "will" of absorbing the latter in the former, must proceed until there shall be only one "*kingdom*," even as there is but one "*King!*"

Yet let it be understood that *the assimilation* of earth to heaven is not by any means equivalent to *the amalgamation* of earth with heaven, nor that "the will of God," in regard to this world, is completed by what shall emerge at the coming of Jesus Christ. On the contrary, *the three petitions*, the meaning of which we have been endeavoring to explain, do not merely indicate three characteristic *states* of change, but three separate *periods* of time. "*Hallowed be thy name*," is a petition that refers chiefly to the present dispensation, during which the elect are gathered out and led home to God as their Father. "*Thy kingdom come*," is a petition which chiefly refers to the dispensation that is to follow, when Satan is laid in irons, and every stream of iniquity and evil runs at the bottom of its channel. "*Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth*," is a petition which chiefly refers to the final dispensation, when "the kingdom" is handed over to the Father, and the New Jerusalem comes down from God out of heaven, prepared as "a bride adorned for her husband."

In other words, the first petition of our Lord's Prayer is *premillennial;* the second, *millennial;* and the third, *post-millennial.*

Within the scope, therefore, of this last petition, we are not merely to rejoice in the assurance that earth is to be *assimilated* to heaven, but knowing that heaven and earth will be incorporated, absorbed, *amalgamated*, let us stretch forward our eye, and realize, without misgiving or reserve, the full consummation of blessedness which awaits the regenerated sons of men, upon a regenerated earth.

If our hopes, however, are so glorious, and if they are so wholly due to the love of God, shall we not go forth to serve our generation, as those who are animated by hopes so bright, and quickened by love so true? There is something still for us to do, in connection with this world's recovery, and the accomplishment of God's "will." Let us all then gird for the enterprise. The number of the elect is not yet gathered in; and why should we not assist in seeking them out, and leading them home, and making them meet for their inheritance? It is "the saints who are to possess the kingdom;" it is "the meek who are to inherit the earth;" and shall we not pass up and down the land, shall we not search through our lanes and garrets, shall we not lift up our voice everywhere in testimony to Him who died for us, if peradventure some ready to perish might become princes of glory?

What an increase might a little more money given in faith, or a little more visiting conducted in faith, or a little more teaching undertaken in faith, or a little more prayer lifted up in faith, bring to the church, of salvation! And shall *that little* be withheld? No; but entering solemnly into the mind of God concerning earth, we must strive with all our means to do for earth what God has done for heaven. We cannot repeal the curse, but we may still many a groan. We cannot bind Satan, but we can bruise him under our feet. We cannot convert a world, but we can bring sinners unto Jesus. We cannot level mountains, and dry up the seas, and build the walls of New Jerusalem, but we can gather in, and make ready, not a few who will with us walk the golden streets, and sound the golden harps, on the day when Jesus cries, "Behold! I make all things new!"

Such are the prospects of our world, as they are defined by the longings of Jesus and His Church. And the vision is bright, though it tarries. That we are on the eve of *the third petition dispensation*, few would contend—for then, the sea shall be no more, and the curse

Digitized by Google

has passed away. But these signs are still afar off. Can we, however, descry any symptom of what the earth shall exhibit when *the dispensation of the second petition* is ushered in? Even this, though it may be near, has not emerged, and whilst every amelioration in the political commonwealth, every beneficent invention in art, every increase of evangelical light, is to many the sure daybreak of the coming restitution, to us it seems as if the world were just at the point where Adam left us. We are still under *the first petition dispensation*, and the stones are no more than collecting for the temple which is to be built; the hosts are arrayed for war, but the last battle is not yet fought.

It grates upon the sensibilities of all, and conflicts with the prejudices of most, to be told that the world has yet to pass through an ordeal of fire, and will hear the howl of the storm, before it enjoys the sweetness of calm. But Scripture is on the side of this view; for in Jude we are solemnly warned by Enoch, that when the Lord comes, it will be to "execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." And a man not given to paradox, nor even addicted to speculation—a man of high celebrity in the scientific world, yet a profound and anxious student of prophecy, we mean Kirby (the name next to that of Linnæus in natural history), has given the sanction of his authority to these views in the following paragraph:

"The future glories and triumphs of Christ's empire have engaged my attention, and were sources of joy. But I see that woes and afflictions are foretold, and that by much tribulation will the kingdom of Christ be purified, and finally established."

But is not analogy on our side also? for if it was on the ruins of a previous creation that our present world was erected, surely what was once, is likely to be witnessed again?

"From the evidence furnished by geology," writes Fullom, "the sea must once have risen in tumultuous waves, and sweeping over the less elevated land, sought to recover the dominion it had lost. Nor was this agitation temporary, as the successive elevation of new territories, cast up by volcanic action, displaced additional bodies of water, and thus continually deranged the level of the ocean. While portions of the land were completely inundated by these deluges, other regions, defended from the sea by massive ramparts, were invaded by monster waterspouts, which, rearing their prodigious columns to the heavens, tore with equal force over land and sea. In the midst of these convulsions, the earth would rend asunder with terrific violence, and rise in waves as lofty as those of the ocean. And to add to the disorder, a thousand volcanoes made the sky red with their flames, and wrapped the shattered land in a mantle of granite. The heat discharged from so many sources discomposed the atmosphere, which resounded with endless peals of thunder, and ravaged every quarter with storm. At the same time, the strata of air were blackened with smoke, and loaded with deadly exhalations.

"But it was by the combined action of these varied forces, that the earth, from being a chaotic heap, acquired a positive and definite figure—securing alike stability and equilibrium. The subterraneous heat expended itself in volcanic action, which, whether manifested in the ejection of lava, or in earthquakes, served in an equal degree to elevate, and mould, and diversify the surface. While volcanoes were thrown up to the clouds to kindle them, other tracts of the infant globe were spread out in plains, or hollowed into valleys, and thus it acquired that endless diversity of aspect which adds so much to its beauty."

Through *convulsion*, then, was it that of old this very earth was brought into its present mould of loveliness and grandeur. And so the analogy of the past would seem to render it probable that even thus again will the earth be prepared as the habitation of the righteous. It will yet be purified by the material flames of Peter, as well as the moral processes of Enoch.

But as we look around on Present Evil, and onward on Future Judgment, perhaps we are discouraged in regard to ourselves, and dismayed also as to the world. In regard to *themselves*, however, the children of God are entitled and bound to use the petitions which Jesus teaches them to offer in their own behalf, and put away fears.

They cried for the world, and now they are to cry as all needy themselves, "*Give us this day our daily bread;*"—having pleaded for the coming of the kingdom, in the first instance, they are next to petition for what concerns the body. "Give us daily bread!" is their demand—and the reason is, that as heirs of the blessed inheritance, they remember that even their mortal flesh shall participate in the glory to be revealed—that ultimately it is to be the associate of their bliss. "The body is dead because

Digitized by Google

of sin; and, mindful of this, believers are to cry, "Give us daily bread," and ask that it may soon become the handmaid, instead of a hindrance, to their progress. "This mortal shall put on immortality;" and, longing for this time, believers are to plead, "Give us daily bread," and implore that their very dust be precious in their Father's sight.

But believers are to cry still further in their own behalf, "*Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors;*" and this breathes the very spirit of "the kingdom" through their souls. Forgiving love is the life of the renewed spirit; and when we ask it to be shed plenteously abroad upon us, it is that we may grow in that love which assimilates us to the God of love, and prepares us for the kingdom of love. Nay, in the day when the inhabitant of the new earth shall be able to say, "My sin is all forgiven," "sickness" shall be unknown; and even now must believers plead with Jesus to keep alive in their heart a warm sense of forgiveness as the pledge of their redemption—the token of the land to which they are journeying. So soon as we lose the consciousness of being reconciled, our hopes immediately decay; and on this account, if we would abound in the anticipations of glory, we must be steadfast in the assurance of pardon.

And, finally, believers cry, "*Lead us not into temptation*, but deliver us from the evil one," for the bruising of Satan is the crisis of their perfection. All temptation is from the devil working on the lusts of the flesh; and hence the heirs of hope long for the day when temptation shall cease, because the tempter is cast out. That day is promised; and whilst we intercede for daily victories over our great adversary, we hasten with holy impatience to the time when neither earth, nor man, shall suffer from the prince of darkness any more.

Neither in the evil aspects of an evil Present, or an evil Future, is there, then, anything that ought to dismay the believer; but holding these last three petitions in his hand, he may encounter any storm. Fear *death* he cannot, but he rejoices in the assurance of resurrection; for is not *this* his incessant cry, and warranted longing, "Give us this day our daily bread," and let my very dust be dear to Thee? Fear *condemnation* he cannot, but he exults in the hope of acceptance; for is not *this* his incessant cry, and warranted longing, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," and see in us no iniquity? Fear even the devil he cannot, but he is persuaded that the very gates of hell cannot prevail against him whose incessant cry and warranted longing is, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one," and hasten that era which shall witness the gates of the pit shut upon him, with all his hosts!

THE CHURCH'S HOPE IN THE EVIL DAY.

MANY things make us feel that the days are evil. In the midst of boastful self-congratulations, there are many events which call up the secret fear or foreboding, "Are we really as safe and prosperous as we are so anxious to believe that we are?" There are changes and tossings which we cannot but look upon as tokens of evil, or at least as causes of misgiving, if not of alarm. The sky is not so clear and calm as we were inclined to believe. Our position is not so secure and unassailable as we once deemed it. Our thoughts sometimes go out over these perplexities; and we feel it good to look them in the face, and not to deceive ourselves by prophesying smooth things, when things are really assuming a rugged and troubled aspect.

Both in the Church and in the world, we see evil things. Let us try to number up a few of them.

I. *In the Church.*

1. There is want of faith. The name "believer" certainly implies much. How little is it realized and exemplified! Faith is assuredly at a low ebb amongst us. We are more like unbelievers than believers.

2. Want of love and zeal. Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. We have left our first love, though perhaps, after all, that first love was poor enough. And with love, zeal is flagging. We prefer to take our ease than to deny ourselves, or to spend and

Digitized by Google

be spent. The love of Christ does not constrain us.

3. Want of life and energy. We are languid and worn out. There is little of reformation-energy, or primitive fire about us. We are inanimate and heartless. We do little enough for God; and what we do, we do but with half a heart.

4. Want of decision. We compromise our character and profession. Nay, worse, we compromise the name of Christ. We shrink from bold avowal of our Lord, or at least from bold acting in his service. We are borderers, and love to hover about the border-land, crossing and re-crossing the border-line, as if afraid of being too decided; nay, perhaps palliating our indecision by giving it the name of *charity*.

5. Want of conscience. Whether it be from the bustle and hurry of the age, or the pressure of duties, that makes the performance of them degenerate into routine, or the over-familiarity with sacred things—one cannot well say; but there is a want of *conscience*, or, to speak more exactly, of tenderness of conscience among those who name the name of Christ. Parents do not make conscience of their duties to their children; office-bearers in the Church do not make conscience of their duties to the flock; brethren in Christ do not make conscience of their duties to one another. The defect in respect of conscience is as sad as it is common.

6. Want of unity. The Church of Christ, instead of being one, is many. It is broken in pieces—divided into sections, between which but little love subsists—ofttimes hostility and variance. What a melancholy contrast do the divided and warring Churches of this age afford, to the representation given us by the Lord and His apostles of what the Church was expected to be!

7. Want of conformity to Christ. The Master's image is not much studied, still less copied, amongst us. We have a sort of standard, below which we think we ought not to fall; but the very likeness of Christ Himself is what we seldom aim at. No wonder that we should be unlike Him; more like children of earth than sons of God!

8. Worldliness. The tendency of the Church is to adopt worldly principles, and to conform her course to that of the world, so that the difference between the two is reduced to a mere line or shadow. Worldly tastes, worldly maxims, worldly recreations, worldly studies, worldly habits—luxury, selfishness, love of ease, covetousness—these, and such like things, most lamentably prevail amongst us. The Church is but little a protester against the world, and the world's ways; rather is she in danger of becoming a lover of the world, and the things of the world.

9. Fallings away. There are many who go back, and walk no more with us. "They go out from us, yet they were never of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us." Yes, the time is an evil one, because of backsliders. There are not only Demases who forsake, but there are Judases who betray. Ah! let us beware of putting our hand to the plough, and then looking back, lest we be found unfit for the kingdom, nay, draw back unto perdition.

II. *In the world.*

1. Idolatry of men. This the age not only practises, but boasts of. Hero-worship! This is one of the distinctive excellences of the time! "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man," is God's awful threat against a former age; surely not less cursed must the man be that *worships* man. The age that sanctions the blasphemy must be an evil one.

2. Idolatry of intellect. The part of man which is especially worshipped is that by which he was at first led astray, seeking to be as God, and going in quest of the knowledge of good and evil. Other things are depreciated; the want of intellect brings contempt; the supposed possession of it elevates, even in the absence of moral qualities. Cleverness, genius, ready wit, originality, and such like—these are the things that men admire, nay, worship. Hence man's wisdom rises in esteem, and the simplicities of Christ are disparaged. The Bible is only admired in so far as it is an exhibition of intellectual power, or as the means of enabling man to display his intellect. That age is evil when, by the worship of human talent, man is exalted; and that part of his being, which has

Digitized by Google

always been most hostile to God, made the object of all but divine adoration.

3. Efforts of Popery. The strokes which Popery received at the Reformation humbled it for a time, but through the potent energies of Jesuitism, it soon rose again; and though it did not recover its former height, yet its onset was in no small measure successful. Then it received a second and a third blow, in different parts, and from these it in some measure always recovered itself. Of late it has been lifting its head once more, and seeking to regain its standing in the high places of the earth, and very desperate is the warfare it is waging for the mastery. Over all Europe the energies which it is putting forth are vast, and full of confidence. What may be the result, we do not undertake to say. It is chiefly with the efforts and operations that we have here to do. It has provoked a battle of no ordinary magnitude, whatever its issues may be.

4. Spread of Infidelity. We believe that within the last thirty or forty years, infidelity has made much more rapid progress than Popery. We do not see its operations. We do not hear of its converts. Its successes are not proclaimed aloud. But secretly it is working with deadly results, undermining truth, overthrowing morality, subverting the Bible, and all that the lovers of the Bible hold precious. Very extensively it is prevailing, especially among our young men, who, under the proud idea of independence, are casting off the authority of Scripture as well as the fear of God.

5. Changes, confusions, and wars. Truly, these are multiplying. The world seems everywhere in motion, shifting, tossing, heaving, like the waves of the sea, with no certain aim or motion. It is not in motion like the river which pours its freshening waters down earth's valleys, till they reach the mighty deep, spreading fruitfulness on every side. It is truly like the restless billows of the deep,—without an object or aim,—tossing, heaving, moving to and fro with every blast; and with these changes come confusions and complications of every kind among the nations,—all things falling into disorder; the statesmen and politicians and philosophers of earth in vain endeavoring to maintain order and tranquillity. And then with confusions have come wars,—wars and rumors of wars. The trumpet of battle is sounding louder and louder. The kingdoms are responding to it, and mustering their armies. We hear on every hand of a great European crisis. Tumult, tempest, darkness, blood, havoc, massacre.

The foundations of the earth are out of course. The arch of heaven above us seems as if ready to give way, and let down the long pent-up ruin. The first shower of the world's last fiery deluge is now falling. How soon the others may succeed to it, we do not presume to calculate. The intervals between will be brief, if indeed there be any intervals at all; if it be not shower upon shower, storm upon storm, earthquake upon earthquake, ruin upon ruin,—till the last drop of the last vial is emptied, in which is filled up the wrath of God.

Such is the evil day on which we have entered! How much of it lies before us, is not the question at this moment. The day is evil—probably to become yet more evil and more sad—both for the Church and for the world. We do need a hope in such a day—a hope which we may hold fast, and which will hold us fast, whatever be the storms above or the earthquake beneath.

We now proceed to inquire into this hope. We shall find it to be sufficient and sure,—just such a hope as the Church needs in the evil day. It may be asked, Has not the Church many hopes, not one only? We answer, She has many refuges, many consolations, in a time of evil; yet she has but one hope. No doubt, that one great hope may be said to include many lesser ones, being like the sun in the centre of a whole system of planets; still the Church's hope is more properly one; the hope of her Lord's coming, or the hope of the kingdom which is to be hers at his coming. Until that hope be realized, she has many props on which to lean, many cordials to sustain and cheer her. She has present fellowship with Him for whose coming she is waiting. She has her closet, with its shut door, into which she can at all times betake herself when the tumult grows louder and the storm beats with more than common fierceness. She has the

Digitized by Google

consciousness of her own security, whatever may befall the earth, and of her relationship to Him who "sits upon the floods," and stills the tumults of the people. She has the Book of God for guidance, and companionship, and light, so that in the darkest hour of the world's midnight she has a light; in the loneliest path along which she has to pass she has society; and in the most intricate thicket or untrodden waste she has an unfailing guide.

All these things she has; and they are all needful and most welcome. But she has something more than these; something beyond these; something to which all these are leading her, and in which they shall ere long be consummated; something of which these are the daily pledges and foretastes. *That something is the appearing and kingdom of her Lord.* This is her true hope, her polestar, her joy and rejoicing. In this she finds the consummation of all that she has been anticipating and preparing for while here. That Christ will come again—that he will come in his glory—that he will come to set up his kingdom—that he will come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe—is what the reader of the Bible knows. Many of the minor points connected with these things we may not fully apprehend nor agree upon, but on these great points we are all at one. We believe that the Lord Jesus, who came the first time in weakness and shame, will come the second time in divine power and glory.

But more than this. It seems very evident that these glorious things are not merely spoken of as futurities, but revealed as the matter of our hope. These things make up our hope; they are not so much separate hopes, as parts of one great hope—stars of one firmament—rays of one sun. In them we find the whole summing up of the things hoped for. The coming and the kingdom of the Lord Jesus—this is what seems to us to be the great theme and object of our hope.

But let us inquire more particularly into this hope, or at least into the reasons why we give the Lord's coming and kingdom so pre-eminently this name.

1. God has bidden us look for them. To "wait for his Son from heaven" is what he has commanded us. To look out with trimmed lamps and girded loins for the Bridegroom's arrival is what he expects of her who calls herself the Bride of the Lamb. And the Lord himself has, once and again, made the words of warning ring in our ears, "Watch, for ye know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh." He has put also into our lips the prayer, "Thy kingdom come." On such hopes as these he has bidden us rest our souls, in the day of our strangership on earth. With such hopes he has exhorted us to comfort ourselves when trouble besets us and evil days arise. When the shadows hang heavily above us, and on all sides there is sorrow, and confusion, and perplexity, then he asks us to lift up our heads, knowing that our redemption draweth nigh.

2. The early Church did so. Evil soon came down upon the Church like a dark storm-cloud. The primitive saints were made to feel the perils and tribulations of which the Master had warned them from the first. The sword awoke against them. The wrath of man burst forth. The world soon made it manifest how much it hated them. In these evil days they grasped the hope; and they found how well it suited. It did not calm the storm; it did not sheathe the sword; it did not arrest the hatred or still the wrath that was rising against them. But it lifted them above these sorrows, and made them speak of them as "light afflictions," lasting but "a moment," which were not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed, and which were working for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Thus they were sustained and cheered. Thus they had light in their dwellings in the days of darkness. They felt that each blast that broke upon them, sharp and heavy as it might be, was wafting them more swiftly to their haven.

3. There is nothing in the future between us and that object worth looking for. Sorrow, darkness, confusion, death on every hand! All before us is a desolate wilderness—a vale of tears—a land of graves. "Much tribulation," or as it is literally, "many tribulations," do we find everywhere in the Church's path. Man, with

Digitized by Google

all his wisdom, cannot help us or remove one of these evils. There they are, and there they must remain until the Lord return. And even though there may be glimpses of sunshine bursting through, yet these are transient and without power, and unsatisfactory. There is nothing calm, nothing bright, nothing blessed, nothing that will abide, on this side the day of the Lord.

4. That object—or these objects, taking them as two—the coming and the Kingdom, are really worthy of being our hope. They are so very glorious, so worthy of God, so worthy of Him who died to purchase for us the inheritance. "Wherefore, God is not ashamed to be called our God, for he hath prepared for us a city." It will compensate for all sorrow here; nay, it will make us wonder why we ever wept with such a glory before us as our hope. Come then, war or peace, we will lift up our heads! Come mirth or sadness, come ease or pain, come light or darkness, come bonds or liberty, come trial or rest—we will be of good cheer, for the Captain of our salvation fights for us—the King of kings is at hand. The skies will soon rend, the day will soon break, the shadows will soon flee away.

THE TIME IS SHORT.

"*The time is short!*" Then how *holy* we should be! Every day and every hour we are setting on ourselves an impress for eternity. O! let that impress be one which shall fit us for a higher place in the everlasting kingdom.

"*The time is short!*" How *active* we should be! Every passing moment pleads with winning eloquence, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

"*The time is short!*" How *cheerful* we should be! The period of our wanderings will soon be over. We shall soon gain our Father's house; soon enter, to go out no more. In the light of this truth, what trouble can greatly distress? What burden greatly weary?

"*The time is short!*" Then how our light should shine! How clearly should men trace in us the proofs of what the grace of God can accomplish! It is a mighty work we have to do. Everlasting issues hang upon it. There are lofty heights to which we may attain in the kingdom of Heaven. There is a crown of fadeless glory which we may wear. Let others tread those heights with us. Let the crown be bright with the jewelry of souls whom *we* have been the means of turning to righteousness.

Not at our Saviour's feet would we lay down
Talents that yield us no stars for our crown.
He gave His life that we sinners might live:
What can life yield us that we would not give?
Take us, dear Saviour; we are not our own:
Help us to live for Thy glory alone.
Thine we are now; and forever would be;—
Help us, O help us, to labor for Thee!

"*The time is short!*" How like a trumpet-call this truth speaks to us to-day! Are we ready? Our lamps—are they trimmed and burning? Some—our Lord himself forewarns us—will be found to have gone out. Let us be very sure that *ours* are not of that number. Many will deride. The unbelieving cry will be heard, "*Where is the promise of His coming?*" Men will put away this truth from them. They will say, "Peace and safety"—forgetting that it is written: "*Then*, sudden destruction shall come upon them, as travail upon a woman with child: and they shall not escape!"

THE SIGNALS THICKEN.

No one can contemplate the extraordinary events of the time without asking if there be not a Providence directing them. History affords no parallel to them.

The oldest sovereignty of Europe, that of the Pope, is rapidly passing away like a mist before the sun. The Prussian monarchy, in defending itself, has raised a revolution that threatens its own existence. The conqueror is embarrassed by his own success and knows not how to allay or direct the storm he has evoked. The crowned heads and aristocracies are greatly alarmed and at their wits' end. All Europe is in a ferment. The light of intelligence is permeating through the masses of the people, and they are clamoring for their rights and liberties. Evidently we are at the dawn of a wonderful transformation in the world.

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

THE LAST ALTERNATIVE.

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."—2 PETER 3: 3, 4.

IN our thinking upon this plain and positive text, we have had in our mind two classes of persons: 1. Skeptics and materialistic philosophers, who have little or no confidence in any supernatural revelation, and who consequently reject and despise particularly all the prophetic statements about the coming again of Christ and the ending of the present world amid catastrophe and judgment. 2. Professing Christians, who accept the Scriptures, but ignore prophecy, put aside and discountenance all earnest study into the subject of the predicted coming again of the Lord, quietly drop out of the Creed one of its most prominent articles without attempting to dispute it, and sneer at the teachers of it as a fanatical and ill-balanced class of minds. We had not supposed, however, what we now see is embraced in it, that the passage contemplated the rising up of a class of expositors within the Church, who should positively deny the whole doctrine of the coming of Christ and the end of the world, as taught in the Scriptures and confessed in all the Creeds. Much less had we anticipated the putting forth, in the name of truth, such daring blasphemy, by ordained ministers of Christ. But it has come to pass; we have witnessed it; and we are willing now to stand corrected, in having, with all our charges against this age of boasted light and progress, given it credit for moderation which it now proves itself not to merit.

A few days ago, we picked up a book, bearing date of 1870, published by a great London house, entitled "*John, or the Apocalypse of the New Testament,*" and bearing the name of a clergyman of the Church of England, a Bachelor of Divinity, and an author commended by Dr. Noyes of Harvard University, and Dr. Rowland Williams of London. The book is also inscribed with the name of Dr. Arthur Perrhyn Stanley, "Dean of Westminster," and "foremost among the divines of the English Church." It is an octavo volume, finely printed, and embracing 293 pages, costing no less than eight shillings and six pence. It is therefore a book of high pretension, and comes out with high churchly surroundings. The writer speaks as a clergyman, and declares himself as a conscientious religious guide, who proposes to set the churches in the clear about this whole question of the advent and the end of the world. And yet, the entire aim and effort of the book is, to teach Christians, that the doctrine of the personal return of Christ, and of a calamitous ending of this world in connection with such a coming, is a mere dream, an absurdity, and not for a moment deserving the serious attention of reasonable men!

This we regard as a very extraordinary occurrence. We have met with instances of ministers and expositors of the Word, who made it a point to gloss over, keep out of view, and put far away, the texts which teach the speedy coming of the Lord to judge and end this evil world. We have seen a widespread and common reluctance of ministers to look at the subject, or to make any practical use of it. We have noticed abundant manifestations of a disposition to regard and pronounce those fanatical, over-zealous, and not exactly sound-minded, who venture to preach or tell out what the Scriptures say about the matter. We have witnessed attempts to make it appear that the texts on these themes are so obscure, and so highly figurative in their character, and have been so variously interpreted and applied, that it is not safe to press them into the pulpit or on the particular attention of the Church. We have found even such men as Moses Stuart jesting and jeering at those who venture to preach the speedy return of Christ to judge the world and set up his own blessed kingdom over

Digitized by Google

the earth, as dealers in "putid fables," "patristic legends," and anything but what they ought to be. But in no previous instance in the acknowledged orthodox Church have we noticed a direct denial that Christ is personally to come again, or that this world is ever to end in the fires of judgment. With all the practical droppage of these doctrines, they were still allowed to stand unchallenged in the common Christian Creed, and subscription to them, in some sense, was still confessed. But here is a minister of the Church of England, high in place, of distinguished consideration and associations, who has undertaken to show the world that all the Creeds of Christendom are totally at fault upon this subject, that no such coming of Christ and ending of the world, near or remote, can be at all substantiated, and that the entire "promise of His coming," as held, believed, and preached from the beginning of Christianity until now, is an exploded dogma, only imaginary from the first, and now proved to be a lie!

To satisfy our readers that we do not misrepresent this ministerial scoffer, we transcribe a few passages from his book, notwithstanding that he advertises "all rights reserved."

"To cure the evil we must get at the root of the matter, and this is the object we have proposed to ourselves in this undertaking. We shall endeavor to show from the writings of the New Testament that the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven was an event expected, although not realized, within the limits of the then existing generation, and that consequently the so-called orthodox view, which defers that event to an epoch yet future, is in direct antagonism to the most explicit declarations of Holy Writ. As the dogma we are about to call in question is expressed in the creeds, not only of the Established Church but of universal Christendom, it would seem necessary that the arguments advanced to establish a contrary position should be of the most sure and convincing kind, resting not merely upon solitary and isolated texts, but affording an uninterrupted series of proofs which, interlacing one with another like the shields of warriors of old time, should form so strong a phalanx of evidence as not only to justify an attack upon a recognized article of faith, but to leave its defenders without excuse. To this conflict we now address ourselves."—Pp. 214, 215.

"The Apocalypse can be interpreted as a whole of events which were expected to usher in the coming of Christ and the Messianic reign. From the prologue to the epilogue our exposition has been kept within the limit of these anticipations, and if the hope which they encouraged has not been verified, it is because the visions of the Revelation revolve around *a grand chimera* of the approaching kingdom of God, which never has, and never will be realized."—P. 207.

"A critical and careful examination of all the passages which bear upon the subject has led to the painful yet inevitable conclusion that the dogma of a second coming of the Lord at some imaginary end of the world, yet future, is one which, however naturally it might be the result of tradition, is not justified by those texts of Scripture which are generally adduced in its support."—P. 252.

"The theory which supposes that the coming of Christ at the end of the world is an event yet future, is a theory which, although it has the sanction of so-called orthodoxy, is contradicted by the current testimony of the New Testament."—P. 255.

"The latter-day anticipations of the early Church were not well-founded, and the acknowledgment of the error might be the first step towards the development of the truth"—Pref., x. "We have, therefore, the less hesitation in affirming the doctrine of a Millennium to be unworthy the attention of the Church in the nineteenth century."—P. 186. "Whilst we willingly accord to the seer of Patmos facility of accommodating power as well as genius, if not strictly original, yet certainly of the most spiritual kind, we are disposed to attach no greater reliability to the vision of judgment presented in the Apocalypse than to the startling phenomenon of the Millennium which precedes it."—P. 189. "Availing ourselves of our Protestant privilege, we have been led to reject the extravagant theories, of which the Revelation is the exponent, and to consider them, not as predictions of actual events, but as the offshoots of a pious yet wayward imagination, the creations of a loving, trustful, yet fevered and heated brain. . . . Whatever its claim to apostolical authorship or canonical position, it can neither be valuable as a prediction, nor be regarded as a safe guide for the performance of the duties of this life, nor for the attainment of that which is to come."—Pp. 190, 191.

All this would seem to be in place in the lips of a heathen philosopher, or of a Deist or Atheist, who rejects all Scripture, and all idea of redemption by Christ Jesus: but in the mouth of a sworn preacher of the Gospel, a vicar in the national Church of England, a learned fellow in the workshop of sacred criticism and leading religious thinking, and a man who numbers Doctors of Divinity, Deans, and high ecclesiastical functionaries, among his friends and patrons: it is one of the most daring and blasphemous exhibitions that we have ever encountered, and presents a fulfilment of the prediction of St. Peter, to a degree of directness, intensity, and impiety, which we had never dreamed of finding in an acknowledged Church of Jesus Christ. Verily, Peter was right, and

Digitized by Google

had in him the unmistaking Spirit of prophecy, when, eighteen hundred years ago, he wrote, that "in the last days" scoffers should come, pronouncing the promise of the Saviour's coming a *chimera*—an empty conceit—an exploded figment; and that too in the name of a true critical reading of the Word of God itself, and in place as teachers of the genuine Gospel.

It was the remark of one who wrote and spoke much on the promised Advent and Kingdom: "It is a rule with me, the more I hear people deny the coming of Christ, the day of judgment, and the conflagration, with other things of the like nature, the more to hold on to them, for their denial is to me one of the highest proofs of the certainty of those events."

But, there is another respect in which this ministerial scoffer gives confirmation to our doctrines, and bears decided testimony to the exegetical strength and invulnerability of what we hold. We take it to be the certain and clear teaching of the canonical Scriptures, that our Lord Jesus Christ will literally and personally return again to this world, clothed with great power and glory, to end this present world with fearful catastrophes of judicial visitation, and thus to introduce a reign of peace and righteousness which will be His kingdom come, and His will done on earth as it is in heaven. We hold that this was the teaching of Christ and all his Apostles, and the common belief of all the early Christians. We hold that that coming is ever presented as an impending event, which might occur even in the lifetime of the Apostles, and which is so presented in the Scriptures, as to keep every generation of Christians in the attitude of watchful expectancy, as if any day or hour might reveal to them their Lord from heaven. And this writer now admits and argues, that these doctrines are entrenched in the received canon of Scripture beyond all possibility of dislodgement. He admits and shows, that "the primitive Church, for the first two or three centuries, was essentially chiliastic," and did receive these doctrines as the truth of God. He admits and shows that so the four Evangelists represent Christ as teaching; that the book of the Acts manifests the acceptation of such teaching by the first churches; that the Epistles with one accord inculcate the same anticipations; and that it is impossible to explain the Apocalypse in any other way, than to refer all its grand visions to the one great event of common expectation at the time, even the Revelation of Jesus Christ for the consummation of the world, and the setting up of His reign of righteousness upon earth. He admits and shows that Christ's promise to return again, had sunk so deeply into the hearts of the writers of the New Testament, that "the expectation of this event ever rose up prominently before them like some huge mountain set in the midst of a plain, visible from all points and at all times;" that "the absorbing idea, either expressed or implied, runs like a thread through the literature of the New Testament, and is incorporated into every form and phase of Christian doctrine;" and that "the Advent," as we anticipate it, "is the starting-point from which spring all motives to obedience, zeal, and holiness, in which centre all hopes of salvation and blessedness, and without which the religion of Jesus could hardly have deserved the name of Christianity." Indeed, his book abounds with statements, arguments, comments, and quotations, which most thoroughly sustain and vindicate the entire exegesis on which we rest our doctrines, and which would pass, with most men, as the elaborate work of the most earnest Millenarian Adventist. Nay, he pronounces most decidedly against those who pretend to legitimate any other exegesis, as undertaking what never can be accomplished on any sound principles of interpretation, fidelity to manifest facts, or sound reason. He speaks in great disrespect towards the men who think and argue as we do, but does not hesitate to pronounce us infinitely more consistent, just, and true to the records and to facts, than those who pretend to confute us from Scripture and history as these now stand.

Thus, for example, he devotes an entire chapter of thirty-eight pages to "The Gospel of the Kingdom," in which he lays out all his strength to prove, and thinks that he has conclusively and forever demonstrated, (1), that "the Gospel, as first preached by Jesus and his disciples, pro-

Digitized by Google

claimed," not what is now so generally the main theme of the pulpit, but "the good news of an approaching Messianic Kingdom to be developed at the end of the age;" (2), that this same, deepened and expanded in the belief and expectations of men, appears from the primitive Christian teaching as reported in Acts; (3), that the early and most honored church-fathers, Clement, Barnabas, the writer of the Apocryphal Esdras, the author of the Sibyl, Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, and others, dwelt above all upon this same conception of things; and (4), that all the teachings connected with the judgment and the end of the world are pervaded throughout with the constant apprehension of the impending coming of Christ in His Kingdom.

Thus, also, he devotes long sections to the proof, and claims it to be absolutely unassailable, that the first Christians expected, and were taught to expect and preach to all the world, an impending advent of the Lord, and with it the end of the age and the setting up of a glorious kingdom on earth, in which all the hopes of the wicked were to be crushed out and the highest blessedness of the righteous fulfilled. He says, indeed, that "the speediness of the expected coming, being either directly or indirectly alluded to in almost every page of the New Testament, is not always insisted upon, just as Alison does not upon every occasion mention the exact period of the French Revolution, or Macaulay describe the geographical position of England with every notice of this country," but that it was to the first believers an intense reality, paramount to death itself, and that the imminency of it was the grand impelling power of the first missionaries, which won all the grand victories of early Christianity. All this he claims as "conclusively shown," inasmuch as it "pervades the whole of the sacred canon, and is as conspicuous in the synoptic Gospels as in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles as in the Revelation."

And yet he proposes to *reverse the hermeneutical verdict of eighteen centuries by arguments drawn from the sacred source alone*, and to expurgate from "all the creeds in Christendom" this whole "chimera" of a personal return of our Lord, a calamitous ending of the world, and a Messianic Kingdom of glory, yet to come! What a proposal upon such admissions!

And how, dear reader, do you suppose that he undertakes to do it? The whole process is nothing more nor less than this: All the records of the New Testament and of the early believers prove incontestably that the Apostles and those contemporaneous with them fully believed all these things, and considered them liable to come to pass in their lifetime; the lapse of time has demonstrated that nothing of the sort anticipated by them took place either in or near their day; ERGO, *everything in the Scriptures and in the teachings of the universal Church on the subject is false, and must be ruled out and rejected as no proper part of God's Revelation!* In other words, Scripture on this subject dare not be quoted and taken for Scripture at all, because some of those who so wrote and believed, mistakenly expected their hopes to be realized in their day!!

Hence, with this man, the Apocalypse is a mere rhapsody in illustration of a falsehood, and dare not be accepted as a basis of faith, and all the rest of the Scriptures have been so discolored and perverted by means of the Apocalypse and other like false writings and reveries that they must be thoroughly expurgated from end to end! Hence he writes: "The predictions put into the mouth of Jesus in the long eschatological discourse, Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, cannot have been uttered by Him as they are reported," p. 255; that "we must make our choice between two alternatives, each equally subversive of traditional views, and must allow that either our Lord himself was in error, or that the latter-day anticipations recorded in the Gospels did not proceed from Him," p. 225; and that hence, also, whatever has been inserted in the other writings of the New Testament, or embraced in the creeds on their authority, so far as relates to this subject, must be renounced as pious fable and foolish dream!

So then, with our doctrines and hopes, all the Creeds, all the records of Prophets and Apostles, and the truthfulness of the reports of

Digitized by Google

the Evangelists of what were the sayings and teachings of Jesus, must stand or fall.

This man says that the best years of his life and the most matured energies of his mind have been given to the "careful examination" of this subject; that his clear and honest conclusion is, that our doctrines cannot be dislodged from the plain and unmistakable wording of the Scriptures as contained in the accepted canon, and that the only way to overturn and banish them is to deny outright that what the Bible says upon the subject is to be at all accredited as inspired or Divine teaching. And he who accepts the latter alternative, and asks Christendom to follow him in this, is the Rev. S. Despaez, B.D., *Vicar of Alvidiston, Wilts.*

WAR AND THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

There has been much preaching and prophesying, within the last hundred years, of a rapidly approaching millennium of peace and happiness for our world. Not from the word of God, but from the pretensions and dreams of a humanitarian philosophy, have these ideas and hopes been begotten, and attempted to be read into the sacred prophecies. To our mind, the evidence from the sacred Scriptures is perfectly conclusive and overwhelming, that all such anticipations are utterly false, and of the devil. We cannot understand, how men can take the Bible, and, with any show of reasonable dealing with its language and claims, suppose for a moment that anything but growing disorder and ultimate ruin is ever to come out of this world, or all its boasted science and improvement.

But, apart from all statements of Revelation or doctrines of prophecy, we would think that, by this time, the *facts*, as they have been developed, ought to satisfy men that these dreams are nothing but delusion. With all the preaching of peace, and the organizations and appliances to bring to an end the ravages of human butchery and the devilish horrors of war, the nineteenth century has been prolific of fearful bloodshed. Not one year of the seventy which ast passed, has been a year of entire peace. Somewhere or other, there has been all the time war. And it has been the most civilized nations, and those paraded as the most thoroughly under the influence of the illumination and advancement of this superlative age, who have done by far the greatest part of the fighting.

We have seen a recent review of the wars of the nineteenth century, which we think it well to reproduce in these columns, and from which the doating spirit of our times ought to learn the emptiness of its hopes and the falsity of its pretensions.

Thus England alone has waged forty-nine wars since 1800. Of these, there have been three with France, two with Russia, five with China, two with Denmark, two with Holland, two with Turkey, two with Burmah, two with Persia, one with the United States, one with Prussia, one with Spain, one with Sweden, one with Portugal, and one with Egypt; the others were with the Peishwa, the Mahrattas, the Great Mogul, Nepaul, Algiers, the Wahabees, the Pindarrees, the Ashantees, Caffres, Hottentots, Baers, Sikhs, Afghans, Canadian rebels, Paraguay, Scinde, Sepoy mutineers, Maoris, Japan, and Abyssinia.

France figures in thirty-seven wars, viz.: four with Austria, three with Russia, three with Prussia (including the present war), three with England, four with the Arab tribes, two with Mexico, two with China, two with Spain, two with Holland, two with Turkey, one with Portugal, one with Hayti, one with Switzerland, one with Denmark, one with Sweden, one with Algiers, one with Morocco, one with Paraguay, one with Japan, and one with the Roman republic.

Russia shows a list of twenty-one wars, viz.: three with France, three with Turkey, two with England, two with Poland, two with Persia, two with Khiva, two with Bokhara, one with Sweden, one with Hungary, one with Egypt, one with China, and one (very long and bloody) with Circassia.

Austria figures in twelve, viz.: five with France, three with Italy, one with Prussia, one with Hungary, one with Denmark, and one with Egypt.

Digitized by Google

Prussia comes last with seven, viz.: three with France, two with Denmark, one with Austria, and one with England.

So much for the leading powers of the Old World. But to the desolating wars above enumerated, must be added the numerous revolutionary movements in Italy and Spain, invariably suppressed with great bloodshed; the dynastic contests of the Carlists and Christinos in Spain, which are not extinct yet, and of the Miguelites and Pedroites in Portugal, all of which occasioned great misery and loss of life.

Then there was the war of independence in Greece, which lasted more than seven years, and was at last terminated by the intervention of England, France, and Russia, and the battle of Navarino.

On this continent, war has been the chronic state of the southern portion of it ever since the Spanish colonies threw off the yoke of the mother country. Incessant revolutions constitute the dreary history of Mexico and the South American States. But we have not been without our troubles. We have had several Indian wars, a war with England, one with Mexico, and our great civil war. Cuba, Hayti, and San Domingo have suffered at intervals from the same scourge. Brazil has recently concluded a long and costly struggle with Paraguay, and, in short, it is difficult to call to mind a single nation in the world which has not been involved in war of some kind or other, domestic or foreign, in the course of the present century.

Asia has seen an enormous amount of bloodshed during the past seventy years. There have been the incessant wars carried on by the English in India, Burmah, Negre, and China; and by the French in Cochin China and Annam; also by the Russians with the Circassians and the wild tribes of Central Asia, and with Turkey and Persia; also by the Turks with the Persians and the Egyptians; by the Persians with the Beloochees, Afghans, and Tartars; and there have been the continual domestic wars among the Afghan, Sikh, Mahratta, and other Hindoo chiefs, for supremacy.

For the first fifteen years of this century there was war all over Europe, and it extended even to this continent. During the next ten years it spread all over Mexico, Central and South America (excepting Brazil). Then Asia and Africa came in for their turn, with the French in Algeria, the English at the Cape and on the west coast, and Egypt on the east; the Russians in Turkey and Circassia; the English and the French in India and China. This lasted for twenty-five years, when the scene shifted to Europe once more, and the Crimean war, the wars in Hungary, Italy, Denmark, Germany, and lastly, France, have filled up the remainder of the time.

What a commentary, this, upon the boasts of modern enlightenment, and upon the Christianity of the populations and governments which are to give us the Millennium! Shame on the philosophy, to say nothing of the way it handles Holy Scripture, which can promise an era of universal and abiding peace and righteousness in the face of such a record! Well might it take up the lamentation of Jeremiah: "*We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble.*"

We are happy to know that there is an era of peace coming, and that it is not far off; an era of peace which *is* peace; when the nations shall learn war no more, and the world shall rest forever under the rule of the Almighty Prince of peace. But it will never come by means of humanitarian reforms, and the progress of earthly science, effort, and freedom. *It is not from this world.* It cometh from heaven. It cometh with judgment and destruction to all in which earthly wisdom rests for its attainment. It cometh with Him who has promised to come again, and whose right it is to reign.

Meanwhile, let the nations rage, and the people imagine vanity. Let the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together. And let the professed ministers of God go on fanning the vanity and false hopes of the depraved and deluded world. He that sitteth in the heavens laugheth at them. The Lord holdeth them in derision. When He setteth up His King on His holy hill of Zion, He will break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden

Digitized by Google

destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape. Let us beware that no man spoil us with vain and deceitful philosophies of human progress and self-redemption.

THE JEWS.

No observant person can fail to notice the great change which has been rapidly going on in the condition and social standing of this remarkable people. Since the destruction of Jerusalem, up to the present century, they were everywhere without civil rights, oppressed, hated, and persecuted, of all the nations of the earth. That they have rights, was first recognized by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1806. The German States led the way in actually conferring upon them the privileges of citizenship, and in disenthralling them from the unpitied wrongs of eighteen centuries. In 1830 a bill in their favor was lost in England, but passed in France. Now they are recognized and acknowledged by nearly all the civilized nations of the earth. Even in Turkey, Egypt, Arabia, and Algiers, they are acknowledged as citizens, and are protected in life, property, and honor, as never before. In Greece, France, the United States, and South America, their synagogues are rivalling in splendor the finest of the Christian churches, and their frequenters have their representatives among the most distinguished citizens in every department of life. In Prussia, Austria, and the German and Scandinavian States, the old restrictions have been taken off. And even in Russia and the States of the Pope their privileges and standing have very greatly improved. In Tuscany and Piedmont they enjoy entire liberty now. Kings and Emperors think it not beneath them to treat with them for the interests of their empires; and the Christian Church has been pleased to show an interest in their behalf unexampled in all the preceding centuries.

Education and general improvement have also been as rapid as these civil enfranchisements. We may well believe what was said by a Jewish Rabbi in a London synagogue: "We are happily emerging from the darkness into which persecutions of unparalleled intensity and duration had banished us. Our domestic, social, and political life is assuming a brightness which we feel assured will become more and more cheering." Whether it be in financial ability, or in the higher walks of learning, in military prowess or diplomatic and political knowledge and skill, the Jews are not wanting in men to rank with the most distinguished. They are beginning to fill, and with honor to the nations, some of the highest places of responsibility and trust. Their influence in our cities is becoming rapidly very great. And the time has come when God is again bringing them forward for some great and important ends in His mysterious providence.

The religious tendencies among the Jews, under these advances, are manifestly toward rationalism, materialism, and unbelief. Their old faith is losing its hold, with their closer identification with the Gentile nations. Every city has its associations and synagogues of "Reformed Jews," who have nearly or quite thrown off the yoke of the ancient Rabbinism with its puerilities, but are substituting for it something seemingly more rational, though even more ruinous. The Talmud is sinking fast, and is gradually giving up the ghost; but the rebound is toward a religion of natural reason, and a more materialistic philosophy. Here and there some are converted to Christianity. Inquirers often come to the universities of England and the Continent for the express purpose of investigating the truth of the Gospel, and not unfrequently find it. Dr. Tholuck has said that "more Jews have been converted to Christianity during the last twenty-five years than during the seventeen centuries preceding." But, for the most part, Renan and his school represent the tendencies of the more progressive Jewish mind with reference to religion. Blindness and hardness of heart are still upon them, and they will not have Christ to rule over them. Let Christians ever pray that that blindness may be taken away, and that light may speedily arise upon benighted Jerusalem. "For if the casting away of them [as God's peculiar people] was the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" Rom. 11 : 15.

Digitized by Google

A WORD ABOUT UNION.

There is an old story, upon which some seem to lay more stress than on the parables of Jesus, which tells of a philosophic father teaching his sons the strength of union, by showing them how easy it is to break a bundle of sticks, taking them one by one, and how difficult taking them all together. Had the venerable gentleman bound up fire with his sticks, he might have shown also the dangerous unwisdom of union where the elements are not homogeneous. Had he exhibited a Roman prisoner chained to a dead carcass, he might have shown the still further lesson of the disability and pestilential horribleness of some unions.

The Bible also tells of a union-furor which prevailed among men in a very early period of the world's history, when "the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose." We do not read, however, that the result was particularly advantageous. Giants, indeed, were produced by the coalition, but judgment came upon its heels, and all the "mighty men" and "men of renown" were drowned from the face of the earth.

The mingling of that which is of God with that which is of man, is a special form of evil, to which people are quite too prone; and it is a very effective engine in Satan's hands, for marring the truth and destroying souls. It may often wear the appearance of something very desirable and promising. It may look like success, triumph, and augmented efficiency, but, in reality, it is surrender, compromise, and defeat. Satan's first effort to frustrate the purpose of God was, to *kill* the holy seed; when that failed, he tried peaceful synthesis and unseemly unions, in which he was much more successful. From this it would appear, that *union*, if not of the proper sort, is worse than murder.

It is one of the vices of our day and our country, that men are ready to compromise and sacrifice almost anything, just for the convenience, grandeur, and supposed strength of union. It matters not how truth suffers, and the Church's testimony is obscured, only that people are united, and dwell in peace, and appear in grand combinations, in which the worst are on the same level with the best, ignoring all distinctions. And, it sometimes happens, that the most antagonistic the more readily unite to put out of the way troublesome truth. Herod and Pilate make friends when the Christ is to be crucified.

We have no hesitation to say, that much of the blatant *unionism* of our day is thoroughly anti-Christian. That which the true man of God is bound to maintain above all things is, *The Truth—The Truth at all costs.* If there can be union in the maintenance of the pure and undamaged Truth, so much the better, and such union should be sought and promoted; but union, on any other conditions, is immoral, and not of God. The miserable expediency which views union as the chief end, and seeks union first, union last, and union all the time—union in the truth if convenient, otherwise, union on half truth, or union on no distinct truth at all, only so there is *union*,—is simply the old story over, by which the devil involved the ancient world in the dreadful condemnation of God.

Inspiration says, "the wisdom which is from above is *first pure*, then peaceable." The implication is, that the wisdom which puts "*peaceable*" *first*, and teaches us to purchase peace and union at the expense of pureness in faith and testimony, is not "from above," but from beneath. Oh, but union is so beautiful—so pleasant—so heavenly! Yes, so were "the daughters of men," but that did not satisfy God, nor keep off the ugly judgment which followed. Peace is a good thing, but it dare not be bought at the expense of God's truth, or at the sacrifice of fidelity in the preaching and confession of that truth. Otherwise, peace is not peace, but a lie, and a devouring sword.

☞ We beg indulgence for the late appearance of our last numbers. The absence from home of the chief Editor has been the cause. We hope now to be more punctual, and must ask the same of our subscribers in transmitting their payments.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. VIII. DECEMBER, 1870. No. 12.

Special Contributions.

PROPHETIC TIMES.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE DATES AND PERIODS OF SACRED PROPHECY.

THAT the kingdom, which is the grand theme of promise and prophecy, and for the manifestation of which we are taught, as the first and leading petition in prayer, to say "Thy kingdom come," contemplates *two* entirely distinct and separate conditions of being, is a truth not sufficiently dwelt upon by the expounders of God's holy Word. That the hope of the Christian is to be realized in resurrection life alone, in which "they neither marry nor are given in marriage" (Matt. 22 : 30), is no more a truth, than that the hope of the Jew, looking for a future restoration and re-establishment as a nation, and the grandeur of his metropolitan city, Jerusalem, "full of boys and girls playing in the streets." (Zec. 8 : 5.) These widely separate conditions are ultimate and abiding; the one endowed with eternal life, imparted in regeneration, the other with perpetuity of natural life, through the restoration of covenant relation in the Mediatorial kingdom of Christ. The one, the subject of *promise*, requiring separateness from the world, because the life imparted is spiritual, and the inheritance is heavenly; the other, the subject of prophecy, contemplating the recovery of humanity in its relation to earth, according to the original purpose of God, in creation.

It is this *form* of the kingdom with which prophecy has mainly to do, as that power which is "to break in pieces, and consume all these (Gentile) kingdoms, and to stand forever." (Dan. 2 : 44.) This kingdom being preeminently the inheritance of the Jew, through his relation to Abraham, according to the flesh, to whom the *land* was given (but not its *possession*). And because of their perpetual allegiance unto the *throne* of the house of David, their divinely constituted king, every step toward its consummation and future establishment most intimately and vitally concerns the other nations of the earth, and imperils the stability of their thrones. And besides, its delay is because of the punishment inflicted upon this very people because of their past unfaithfulness and rebellion, while holding the inheritance, conditioned upon their obedience to the law. Upon this *one* feature all prophetic periods are made to depend; "the seven times" of Moses, the "two thousand and three hundred days," and the other shorter periods of Daniel, all have primary reference to the chastisements visited upon this people and nation.

Whatever of uncertainty may surround the commencement or the termination of these periods, the duration alone being given, there must be unmistakable correspondences between the circumstances of their commencement and their close, or the events must be so far answerable to the purpose for which such revelation was made, as to leave no doubt of their accomplishment. In those instances, and they are the general rule which obtains in prophecy, in which the commencement of a definite period is made dependent upon events, or a series of events in the order of succession,

Digitized by Google

tending to completion, requiring time for their development and ultimate accomplishment, *in like manner* will be their fulfilment. If in the commencement it was inceptive and inchoate, so in like manner will be its termination, preserving like correspondences, period being answerable to period.

This principle has been too much overlooked; but it has a divine warrant, as will be shown in the sequel. We may state the proposition broadly thus: Prophecy is to its fulfilment as specified time is to its certainty. But the *time* must have reference alone to the events with which it is associated, and the object to be accomplished, according to the intent of the vision or revelation. This is a matter of the very first importance; the object to be attained, or the punishment to be endured, must have reference to the promise to be realized, and the persons addressed. Want of proper discrimination and accurate distinction on this point, has largely contributed to the confusion and error that everywhere obtains throughout the Christian Church, thereby rendering uncertain the revealed purpose of God. Take one example. The sixtieth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah is intensely Jewish throughout, and descriptive of the future glory of restored Israel; it is the sunshine after the storm; and yet by perversion and accommodation, it is made descriptive of the prosperous condition of the Gentile Church! The writer once listened to an exposition of the twenty-second verse, in which the attempt was made to prove, that it was through a particular denomination alone, these blessings were to be realized!

Taking first the "seven times," or the two thousand five hundred and twenty years of dispersion and denationalization, for the disobedience and rebellion of Israel under the law, as predicted by Moses (Lev. 26 : 18, 21, 24, 28), and indicative of the entire period of God's displeasure toward them, and accepting the historical dates of God's afflictive dispensations, as visited upon them, we may seek for corresponding deliverances answerable to the several periods of such visitation, and a completed restoration, corresponding to the time of their accomplished overthrow. If the uniformity of law is found to obtain in the application of this rule, then it will follow, that we have established a *principle* for the proper understanding of revealed time, as connected with events in prophecy. And as their final overthrow was the result of several afflictive visitations toward them as a nation, so we may expect to find in their future restoration corresponding ameliorations, answerable to the several specified periods, as preparatory to their ultimate and complete restoration. We may further notice striking coincidences, not, perhaps, prophetic, but denotive of cycles, measured by the same periods, adumbrating the significancy of numbers as employed in the Scriptures.*

Taking them as the commencement of the "seven times," or the 2520 years of punishment to be visited upon the congregation of Israel.

The Time When.	*Corresponding Termination.*
Hosea became tributary to Shalmanezer, B. C. 728, and in relying upon Egypt, refuses tribute, and is taken captive, B. C. 724, to the second captivity of the ten tribes, and end of the kingdom of Israel, B. C. 721. We have a period of seven years, to which, if we add the full period of punishment. the 2520 years will bring us to—	A. D. 1792–1799. The era of the French Revolution. The flight of the Pope, and suppression of the Papal government. In the advance of liberty and the limitation of ghostly power, we have the efficient cause for the present amelioration of the condition of the Jew, throughout the civilized world.
First invasion of Judah by Sennacherib, B. C. 715, followed by the second invasion and destruction of his army, B. C. 710. A period of five years, brings us to—	A. D. 1805–1810. Inquisition suppressed. Papal states united to France. Formation in London of *the Society for the Conversion of the Jew.* The great American Missionary Society founded in Boston. Period of the Napoleonic wars, and enlargement of civil and religious liberty.

* As a mere coincident, perhaps in no way connected with prophetic time (?), we would call attention to at least a significant correspondency in prophetic cycles.

The dedication of Solomon's temple was B. C. 1003; add thereto 2520, the seven times of Moses, and we have A. D. 1517, when Luther published his ninety-five theses!

Revolt of ten tribes B. C. 975 = A. D. 1545, Council of Trent.

Digitized by Google

The Time When.	*Corresponding Termination.*
Manassah king, B. C. 698.	A. D. 1822–1849. Dismemberment of Turkey and the virtual overthrow of the Mohammedan power. Restoration of Grecian nationality. Garibaldean revolution. Further loss of political power, and territorial domain by the Papacy.
Manassah's captivity, B. C. 677.	
Carried to Babylon, B. C. 671.	
A period of 27 years, which brings us to—	A. D. 1877–1879.
Amon's wicked reign, B. C. 643 to 641. Period two years.	
Nebuchadnezzar renders Jehoiakim tributary, and carries Daniel to Babylon, B. C. 606. Jeconiah is dethroned and carried to Babylon, and the Davidic line is broken (B. C. 598), constituting "the full end," or completion of that series of judgments which inaugurated the period of Israel's dispersion, and running through a series of one hundred and twenty-two or one hundred and thirty years, bringing us to—	A. D. 1914–1922. "Just as I have watched over them to pluck up, and to pull down and to overthrow, and to destroy and to do harm; so will I watch over them to build, and to plant, saith the Lord."—Jer. 31 : 28. Period of restoration 122 years.

That this is the completion of this period is declared by the prophet Ezek. 7 : 2. "There is an end; the end is come upon the four corners of the land;" and immediately after the prophet, in vision, was called to witness the final departure of the Shechinah-glory from the "inner court" as it proceeded to "the threshold of the house," and then "stood over the cherubim," "and then the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountains, which are on the east side of the city." Ez. 10 : 3, 4, 18; 11 : 23. Of Jeconiah, it is said, "Thou death-deserving wicked one, prince of Israel, whose day is come, at the time of the iniquity of the end, thus hath said the Lord, Remove the mitre, take off the crown; *overthrown, overthrown, overthrown,* will I render it; also *this shall not belong to any one,* until He come whose right it is, and I will give it him." Ez. 21 : 30, 32. (*Leeser's Reading.*)

We learn furthermore, that the last end of the indignation, contemplates the completion of Israel's dispersion, and his full restoration, so that all things that are written will then have been fulfilled. The period of 122 or 130 years, includes their re-establishment in the land of their fathers, as it before had resulted in their removal.

This principle seems to have the uniformity of a law, in prophetic periods. The four hundred years of affliction, determined upon the immediate descendants of Abraham, terminating with the judgment of their oppressors, and their deliverance, was at "the end of the four hundred and thirty years, on the *self-same day* the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." Ex. 12 : 41. The Lord is not slack concerning his promises.

But has this principle of the fulfilment of prophecy, by periods, a divine warrant? Or are the foregoing correspondences mere coincidences?

Let us take the Babylonish captivity as evidence.

The Time When.	*Corresponding Termination.*
Nebuchadnezzar renders Jeconiah tributary, B. C. 606.	B. C. 536. Cyrus issues his decree, restoring liberty to the Jews, and encouraging them to rebuild their capital.
Less the 70 years =	
Jeconiah is carried captive to Babylon, B. C., 598.	B. C. 528. Zerubbabel and Jeshua set about rebuilding the temple.
Less the 70 years =	
Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem, B. C. 590.	B. C. 520. Zerubbabel and Jeshua, after the Samaritan interruption, set forward to complete the temple.
Less the 70 years =	
Zedekiah carried captive to Babylon. Jerusalem destroyed, the Temple burnt, and an utter end to the kingdom of Judah, B. C. 588.	B. C. 518. Darius compels the Samaritans and others to desist from their endeavors to embarrass the Jews, and to furnish them aid from the king's tribute.
Less the 70 years =	
Nebuchadnezzar sends the scattered remnant to Babylon, B. C. 584.	B. C. 514. Temple furnished and dedicated.
Less the 70 years =	

Period of consummation in either case is 22 years.

We come now to the consideration of the next larger period of prophetic time. The Golden Head of Gentile domination had passed off the stage, and we are now to contemplate the Jew in his relation to the Medo-Persian and Grecian powers, as the dominant world-kingdoms of time. The vision itself is peculiar, and contemplates the struggles and mad ambition of two rival powers, in which the

Digitized by Google

Jew has no direct or personal interest. No longer existing as an independent nation, he has neither voice nor agency in the strife, and yet his destiny and future well-being are intimately dependent upon the issue. He is in their hands, helpless, and their contests, conflicts, and aggressions, deeply concern *the land* of their inheritance, *the city* of their solemn feasts, and *the temple* of their holy service, and will so continue unto the end. The interruption of the "continual sacrifice and the wasting desolation, to give up both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot," were but the *incidents* in the cruel ambition of the monarchs of earth, and of the godlessness of the age, and which oftentimes their own bad passions would intensify and augment. Daniel on beholding the desolations stood appalled and overwhelmed until a certain holy one inquired, "For how long shall be the vision?" The answer is definite, clear, and explicit, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days, when the sanctuary shall be cleansed." Dan. 8 : 14.

In computing the *time* in this vision, the issue alone concerns the Jew, the conflicts between the Ram and the Goat mark its inception. By epochs strongly marked, and well determined, we shall endeavor to find such correspondences as will confirm the correctness of our principle, and the terminations assigned to the previous period, always, however, bearing in mind, that the vision concerns the Jew far more directly than the Gentile.

The Time When.	*Corresponding Termination.*
Persians wage war against the Greeks, B. C. 500. Persians defeated at Marathon, B. C. 491.	A. D. 1800–1809. The suppression of the Inquisition in Spain, and that Papal intolerance, from which none suffered more than the Jew.
Period 9 years. Add 2300 =	
Battle of Salamis, B. C. 480. Xerxes abandons the Grecian war and is slain, B. C. 465.	A. D. 1820–1835. Inquisition suppressed by the Cortes. Decline of the Mohammedan power and dismemberment of Turkey.
Period 15 years. Add 2300 =	
Seventy weeks of Daniel, B. C. 457 =	A. D. 1843.
Haman plots the destruction of the Jews, B. C. 453 =	A. D. 1847. Period of the Garibaldian revolution.
Peace of Antalcidas, B. C. 387 =	A. D. 1913. The time of the end.
Period of conflict 113 years.	Period of restoration, 113 years.

The eleventh chapter of Daniel, without reference to definite time, takes up the order of the succession of events as connected with the relation of the Jews to the Grecian Kingdom, and more especially with that of "a little horn that came out of one of the four notable horns, and waxed exceeding great, toward the south and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land" (Dan. 8 : 9): the continuance of which is measured by the same period assigned to the little Roman horn. The end of the vision is then determined by its correspondences with the former, and by the limit of the little horn world-power developed within one of the four primary divisions of the disintegrated Grecian kingdom. The full end of the greater period of Moses is either the first captivity under Nebuchadnezzar, B. C. 606, Jeconiah's dethronement and captivity, B. C. 598, or Zedekiah's captivity, and actual destruction of the temple and the city, B. C. 588, terminating respectively in A. D. 1914, 1922, or 1932. Beyond this, it is impossible to compute prophetic time, for the full end has assuredly come.

We have now remaining *the three shorter periods*, as made known to Daniel, the commencement of which is made dependent upon certain developments in the third and fourth world-kingdoms, signified by the four beasts of Gentile supremacy, and are to continue in open hostility, alike to the Jew and the Christian (for the one affects Christianity, the other is contrary to both), until destroyed by the coming Deliverer, as heir to David's throne and kingdom. The several periods, 1260, 1290, and 1335, appear to be, and are generally regarded as included within the periods allotted to the bestial powers, upon which they are parasitic growths denotive of certain peculiarities, and pre-eminent only in wickedness and hostility to God's people. And as in the former instances, their commencement may have been inceptive, and date from several points in the order of their development, and thus have as many corresponding terminations, still they must necessarily have their maturity, a point which perfectly meets all the conditions of the vision, beyond which it is impossible to go,

Digitized by Google

without having prophecy ever repeat itself, and thus destroy all correspondency. And in being parasites, their lives terminate with that of the beast of which they are a part. The vision, in both instances, requires that the little horns should be manifested as world-powers of like nature with the beast upon whom they grew; and singularly enough, in whatever other light they may be, or may have been regarded, the prophet never alludes to them as being possessed of any other character. Its vigilant eyes, its boastful mouth, and its blasphemous utterances, alone distinguish it from the co-existing world-kingdoms of time, or the bestial forms of Gentile supremacy. It is only in the Revelation of St. John, after the rapture of the Christian Church, her adulterous character is declared, and she is then exhibited as the great whore of Babylon, in the attempt to clothe herself with the precious things of earth, to arrogate its authority, first in the name of Christ, and then avowedly as the *beast*, but always in opposition to the inheritance of the Jew. So true it is, for the church in anywise to affect, or to assume temporal authority, is not only with the church in Pergamos, to "dwell where Satan's throne is," but to become herself a bestial power under the control of "the god of this world."

The three smaller periods of Daniel, are developments from within the beasts themselves, modifications in the circumstances or conditions of the bestial life with which they stand related. The periods are 1260, 1290, and 1335, showing a difference of 30 and 45 years between them, or 75 in the aggregate. Regarding them as denotive of the Papal and Mohammedan powers, we have, from the edict of Justinian, conferring supremacy upon the Bishop of Rome, A. D. 533 + 1260 = A. D. 1793 + 30 = A. D. 1823 + 45 = A. D. 1868. Or from the edict of Phocas, A. D. 606 + 1260 = A. D. 1866 + 30 = A. D. 1896 + 45 = A. D. 1941. And dating the commencement of the Saracenic horn from the retirement of Mohammed to his cave at Mecca, we have a perfect agreement in time with the decree of Phocas. We have also, so far, followed the commentators in assigning a *prolonged* duration to both the Roman and the Grecian "little horn" power, as not materially affecting the issue. But still it may be questioned whether it has any foundation in Scripture, or can authoritatively be applied to any but the Saracenic horn. The numbers occur but once (Dan. 12:12), and are connected with a somewhat detailed account of the conflicts to which the Saracenic horn is subjected, as more immediately relating to "the land," "the city," and "the temple" of Daniel's people and nation. And St. John, who doubtless completes the history of the Roman little horn, as the great bestial power upon the earth, after the rapture of the Church, constantly alludes to its period as 1260 days, the same assigned to it by Daniel. Besides we cannot find that correspondency in the successive periods assigned to it, either in its development or in its period of decay. Taking Justinian's decree, A. D. 533 + 30 = A. D. 563, having a corresponding termination, A. D. 1793 + 30 = A. D. 1823—we find no corresponding events answerable to the periods designated. Confining the Roman horn to the period of 1260 days, we have—

Justinian's decree, A. D. 533 + 1260 = A. D. 1793, the period of the French revolution.
Decree of Phocas, A. D. 606 + 1260 = A. D. 1866, period of Papal disintegration.
Western church dissolves communion with the Eastern, and became strictly and essentially a world power, A. D. 653 + 1260 = A. D. 1913, as the time of the end.
Period of development, 120 years. Period of consumption, 120 years.

Many intermediate periods could be selected having like correspondences, which would add interest to the inquiry, but would occupy too much space.

This brings us to the consideration of the Saracenic horn, which came out of the notable Arabian horn on the Grecian Goat, and commonly, is reckoned from the retirement of Mohammed to the cave at Mecca, A. D. 606, in which view it is coterminal with the Roman horn according to the decree of Phocas, assigning to each a *prolonged* time. Why this date should be *arbitrarily taken*, rather than that of the Hegira, A. D. 622, from which his followers reckon their time, does not appear.

Digitized by Google

Why it may not with equal propriety be applied to the rude and barbarous tribes, living in independence, deriving their origin from Ishmael, and professing a religion which was a mixture of idolatry and Judaism, and afterward rendered only the more terrible under the leadership of that energetic impostor and chieftain, is by no means apparent. This power had an existence before Mohammed appeared upon the stage; that he controlled and directed it, admits of no question. His entire system was so framed as to pander to their habits and distinctive peculiarities; it was *such a people* that determined his system, and not his system that made his followers. It doubtless intensified their peculiarities, and gave a directness to their efforts, and an impetus to their prowess, and imparted a wild fanaticism to their conquests, but the people were the *horn*, the *power*, and not their leader. It is not the Pope, nor Boniface, nor yet Phocas, or Justinian, that constitutes the little horn in the vision, but the spirit of apostasy that was at work in the days of Paul.

We are still here dealing with the descendants of Abraham, and the distinction becomes important in the consideration of revealed periods of time, the commencement and termination of which, in a *primary sense*, affects alone Ishmael and Isaac, and their descendants. We have furnished us a case in point; the four hundred years of Egyptian servitude is alone determined by the exode of the tribes and their passage through the Red Sea. It was "*the selfsame day*" on which the period was completed, and it is only by counting back we discover the commencement to have dated from the sending away of Ishmael, in order that the land should be held alone for Isaac—"the seed according to the promise." In like manner, as an historic fact, *we know* the independent existence of the Turkish empire *ceased* in A.D. 1839, through the intervention of the great dominant powers of Europe to deliver the Sultan from the power of Ibrahim Ali, Pasha of Egypt, and with the fall of St. Jean d'Acre, fell the Crescent to rise no more. Turkey now is but a creature of diplomacy. This, then, must be regarded as the first ending of the period assigned to the Syrian "little horn;" add thereto 30 years = A.D. 1869 + 45 = A.D. 1914, as the full time of Israel's completed restoration, when, as under Joshua, they shall have passed the Jordan, or under Zerubbabel, the temple shall have been rebuilt, re-dedicated and purified. As the time when the Davidic kingdom shall have been re-established, and the glory of the Son of David shall shine forth in the full effulgence of majesty, and the groaning creation shall celebrate its jubilee. Thus the shorter periods of Daniel readily harmonize, in corresponding terminations, answerable to the larger periods of revealed prophetic time.

This shorter period of 30 years finds a corresponding fulfilment in the threatening attitude and growing importance of the same Pachalic that imperilled the Sultan in A.D. 1839; in the opening of the Suez Canal, still further tending to dry up this Euphratean stream; together with the moral power and security thrown about the Jew through the kindly offices of the United States Government in their behalf, before the courts of Europe, sufficiently marked A.D. 1869 as the termination of the second period, in the prolongation of existence given unto this little horn.

We have thus endeavored to determine the limit of prophetic time, and from the Scriptures themselves to learn something of the manner of computing it, and all along we find correspondences too marked to be merely accidental or fanciful, all tending to a definite result. At whatever period earlier than that which we have ascertained to be the "time of the end" of Israel's denationalization and dispersion, the kingdom may be manifested, we venture no opinion, yet we are informed "the days shall be shortened;" but it seems impossible to extend the "seven times" beyond the Babylonian captivity, or the dethronement of Jeconiah, B.C. 606 or 598 = A D. 1914 or 1922. It would seem more probable that the commencement of the seventy years' captivity, together with the corresponding investiture of Nebuchadnezzar, with as absolute dominion as God ever delegated to man, as the "head of gold," contemplates the commencement of "the times of the Gentiles," which points to A.D. 1914 as "the

Digitized by Google

time of the end," which also is supported by the corresponding terminations of the shorter periods of Daniel and John.*

But when "these things *begin* to come to pass" (they had their commencement in A.D. 1792), we are enjoined to "lift up our heads, knowing our redemption hath drawn nigh." No word of prophecy determines the time of the rapture, or the removal of the Gentile Church. It may occur at any moment; it stands related, in order of dependency, with no event, only we are assured of our being saved from the hour of tribulation, the great one, while others are left to pass through the terrible ordeal. In order to this end, our sufficient directory is to *watch*, lest our hearts be overcharged with this world, and so we lose our reward. But not only so, when our Lord comes, He will bring his raptured saints with Him; which implies a previous ingathering, in order to such an end.

Again, the Revelation opens with an address to the Churches, in every instance implying the rewards of the Kingdom, in *Eternal Life*, in contrast with those who remain still in the flesh. As we hear no more of the Church in all the subsequent events portrayed in this truly wonderful Book, the conclusion is legitimate, the Church has then already been removed. And if we have already so far entered upon the time of the end, and also upon the *last* division of the period of prophetic time, and only *forty-five* years yet remain to finish up the transgression, before all things written in the law and the prophets shall have been fulfilled, we cannot be indifferent to our preparedness for the glory that shall be revealed in us at His appearing and Kingdom. Every moment now is big with interest, and every event looks forward to the approaching end. The recent decision of the Roman Council has placed a *god* upon the earth; it has given to man attributes and prerogatives that pertain to God only, from the power and influence of which there is no escape. It remains but to *reclothe* him with the requisite secular authority and power and we have standing before us, full fledged, "The Man of Sin."

The events now transpiring in Europe prevent any "speculations" as to the future manifestation of the Roman beast, or "the image" that is quickened into being; we only know its character remains the same, ever antagonizing the Jew and also the Christian, ever opposed to the truth. We should regard the Papacy simply as a bestial power, in no wise distinguished, except in the enormity of its wickedness, from the other horns which grew upon the beast. After the translation, when the restraining power that now hinders shall have been taken out of the way, her incests, adulteries, and whoredoms shall only become the more conspicuous, as she covenants or breaks her faith with the Jew for the power of earth, and finally makes war with the Jew and against Jerusalem, when she meets her final overthrow at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Whether the Syrian horn is so corrupted by the sorceries of the great *whore* of Babylon, which "trades in the souls of men," as unitedly with it to give its power to the Beast, in order to antagonize the Jew and the Kingdom of Christ, we cannot definitely ascertain; but it

---

* By the decree of God, Nebuchadnezzar was constituted "The Head of Gold," or the *first kingdom* of Gentile supremacy and domination, after the interruption of the Davidic authority. The decree was made known by Daniel in the interpretation of the king's dream, after the subjection of the Jews, "to whom pertain the adoption and the covenants;" and as the times of the Gentiles are coexistent and coterminal with the Jewish dispersion, they must consequently end in A. D. 1914.

The "seventy weeks," omitting fractions.

B. C. 457	Ezra appointed governor of Judea by Darius Artaxerxes.
— 49	7 weeks. "The wall built in troublous times."
B. C. 408	The reformation under Nehemiah.
— 434	Remaining 62 weeks.
A. D. 26	Beginning of John's ministry.
+ 7	Remaining week.
A. D. 33	Week of crucifixion.
B. C. 446	Nehemiah receives his commission.
— 49	7 weeks.
B. C. 397	No correspondent event.
— 434	Remaining 62 weeks.
A. D. 37	*Last half* of the week of the crucifixion; *calling of Gentiles.*
1	Week remaining. The time of the end.

Digitized by Google

seems probable, since Jerusalem and the land of Palestine is the theatre of the last great conflict.

ISRAEL.

How bright once glowed the golden light
On Israel's sunny hills;
Where flowed the milk and honey white,
Where dashed the silver rills;
Where in the quiet, peaceful glade,
The fruit and flowers grew;
And vine and fig tree's genial shade
Each happy mortal knew.

Where God in grand Shechinah light
Did manifest His power,
And with a might supernal fight
In war's disastrous hour.
When erst the proud Assyrian
Made vain and haughty boast,
(Unlike the humble Tyrian)
He died with all his host!

They yet were once Egyptian serf,
Who, weary of their life,
Did pray to sleep beneath the turf,
To end the hopeless strife.
Yet even then their glory great
Pre-eminently shown,
And in their lowly servile state
Gleamed bright on Pharaoh's throne.

The despot felt the awful shock,
Released the toiling band,
And felt the might of Israel's Rock
His strength could not withstand.
And when his sordid spirit raved
In folly impotent,
God's people from his hand were saved,
Whilst he to doom was sent.

Their foes all fled before their face,
As to the promised land
They went, with joyous songs of praise,
A chosen, happy band.
Not e'en their black ingratitude
Could alienate His love,
But by their side He ever stood,
Nor from them would remove.

But, ah! "Jeshurun waxed" great,
He knew no more his God;
To save them from impending fate,
He sent His scathing rod.
"By Babel's streams they sat and wept,"
In sad captivity;
Their plaintive harp, that long had slept,
Awoke to minstrelsy.

Then turned they to the Lord their strength,
In penitence and pain,
The needful lesson learnt at length,
That other trust is vain.
And now He sends them home again,
As promised, by the Mede,
Whilst joyful burst the holy strain,
Exultant at the deed.

And now with eager eyes they look
For Israel's gleaming star,
So long foretold by Sacred Book,
And see its beams afar.
They wait Messiah's glorious reign
On David's royal throne,
His people to restore again
The greatness that had flown.

He comes, He comes in poverty,
Without assumption's state,
No regal show or pageantry,
No trappings of the great.
His glory, is humility,
His grandeur truth and grace,
And ever sweet tranquillity
Illumes His holy face.

With ancient spirit now they cry,
"He shall not o'er us reign!
Away! away! Him crucify!"
And thus the Lamb was slain!
Beloved for the Father's sake,
How *can* I give Thee up;
How can I Thee an outcast make,
And pour on Thee wrath's cup?

O, wondrous love! mysterious grace!
Transcending aught e'er known,
Again He'll own this outcast race,
And reign on David's throne.
And *then* He'll come in regal state,
So reads the story sweet,
And angel bands attendant wait,
His holy will to meet.

And Israel again will be
Of all the nations first;
From sin's dark thrall forever free,
And no more be accursed.
Oh! how the tears will blind their eyes,
As on Mount Olivet,
Descending from the opening skies,
His sacred feet He'll set.

And when He cometh in the cloud,
Each eye shall see Him then,
And oh! the bitter wailings loud,
That they their Lord have slain.
They'll see His blessed, pierced side,
His holy, wounded hands,
They'll recognise the Crucified,
And own His just demands.

And then "the desert shall rejoice,
And blossom as the rose,"
And pæans glad from every voice,
That sin has had a close,
Ascend through all the universe,
No more shall sighs be heard,
And sorrow and the blasting curse
Flee at His potent word.

M. E. S

Digitized by Google

Selections.

WAITING FOR THE LORD.

THE people of God have always been a *waiting* people. If we go back to the good old patriarch Jacob, as he lay upon his dying bed, we hear him break out in langunge like this: "I have *waited* for thy salvation, O Lord." Jacob had no idea of goihg to heaven when he died, for he says, "I am to be gathered unto my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron, the Hittite." He expected to lie down in the grave, and wait until God's plan of salvation should be completed, and then to share in that salvation with all the faithful. Patient Job says, "All the days of my appointed time will I *wait*, till my change come." Job is waiting to-day.

The Psalmist seems to have had a large measure of the waiting spirit. He says, "My soul doth *wait* for the Lord, and in his word do I hope." And again, "My soul *waiteth* for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning." And again, "Those that *wait* upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth." Hear the prophet Isaiah: "They shall not be ashamed that *wait* for me, saith the Lord." And again, "He [Christ] shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall *wait* for his law." Again, "Men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, oh God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that *waiteth* for him." Again, "Blessed are all they that *wait* for him." Again, "They that *wait* upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint." This, surely, must be in the immortal state.

Jeremiah, while he laments the sins of his people, and the evil times in which he lived, says, "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly *wait* for the salvation of the Lord." Micah says, "I will *wait* for the God of my salvation." Habakkuk says, "If the vision tarry, *wait* for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." The glorious angel of the Lord told Daniel, "Blessed is he that *waiteth* and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days"

Again, Paul exhorts the Corinthian brethren that they "come behind in no gift; *waiting* for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And again, he thanks God in behalf of the Thessalonian brethren, that they had "turned . . . from idols to serve the living and true God; and to *wait* for his Son from heaven." And he prays that they may be directed "into the love of God, and into the patient *waiting* for Christ." And in the eleventh of Hebrews, where he recounts a long list of the faithful, he says: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises," "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect;" so that they also are *waiting* for the things promised.

When John, in vision, on Patmos, heard the souls under the altar praying to be avenged, they were told that they should "rest," or *wait* until the number of martyrs for Jesus and his truth should be complete. And when the waiting days are over, and the King of Glory comes at last, Isaiah represents the triumphant saints as exclaiming, "Lo, this is our God; we have *waited* for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have *waited* for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

Our waiting days are almost ended; the midnight shadows are fast fleeing away; the day begins to break, and soon will burst upon us in all its resplendent glory. Let us see to it that "we come behind in no gift," but are wholly the Lord's, and with all our hearts loving the appearing of Jesus. So shall we wait with patience, yet joyful in hope, and strong in faith. He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. Let us wait for Him, as they that wait for the morning.

Digitized by Google

AMEN; ALLELUIA.

Few words have been more frequently used than the two now before us. We are, alas! living in a world where God is contradicted and blasphemed. Man's alienated heart is at enmity with God, and so has no "AMEN" for His gracious words, no "ALLELUIA" over His mighty and manifest acts. Creation, also, once full of harmony, groans and travails in pain. Yet still "Amen and Alleluia" are very often said or sung, not always intelligently or adoringly; and unless this is the case, God is not honored, or the utterer benefited. Our hearts should be in sympathy with the import of the words we utter. If the Spirit of Truth be our teacher, these often vainly repeated words will express our wonder and worship, and God "will be well pleased" with the same.

The literal signification of the words "Amen" and "Alleluia" is well known; the first signifying "SO BE IT" or "SO LET IT BE," and the second, "PRAISE YE JEHOVAH." They are Hebrew words, and are both found in several places in the Old Testament, being used by ancient Israel in their temple worship. They were early transferred to the Christian Church; and well indeed would it have been, if everything introduced from the former dispensation into the present had been as good and proper. But, alas! it has not been so. For the use of the word "Amen" among the people of Israel, we would refer to Deut. 27:14, 26; 1 Kings 1:36; Jer. 28:6; and especially to Neh. 8:6, when Ezra having blessed Jehovah, the great God, "all the people answered AMEN, AMEN, with lifting up of their hands; and they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground." ALLELUIA is found at the beginning and end of many of these Psalms, especially those toward the close of the collection. The Psalms from 114–118 inclusive, are called "*the great Hallel*," and have for many ages been used by the Jews at their pascal feast. It is supposed by many, that here the "*hymn*" is found which was sung by the Lord and His Apostles just before He went out to Gethsemane. Several of these Psalms refer to Himself, describing His sorrows, His conflicts, His enemies, His hopes and triumphs. There is also reference to the deliverance from Egypt then commemorated, which was a shadow of a greater salvation to come, even eternal redemption, procured by His death and resurrection, to be consummated and crowned at His second coming by the resurrection of His people, Israel's restoration, and the reign of righteousness over the whole earth.

The similarity between some portions of the 118th Psalm and the beginning of Rev. 19 is well worthy of notice, especially if we consider the Lord's words on leaving the Temple, after denouncing the woes that should come upon the people who had rejected Him. "Ye shall not see me till ye shall say, Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. 23:39, with Ps. 118:26.)

Some have thought that the first time the word "Alleluia" occurs in Scripture is at the close of the 104th Psalm, and follows immediately after some very solemn words which relate to the closing scenes of earth's history: "Let the sinners be consumed *out of the earth*, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Praise ye the Lord," or "ALLELUIA." This Psalm is a grand descant on creation, describing its origin, beauties, sublimities, vastness, and variety; but it is the descant of a devout and adoring spirit, who rises up to the Creator, goes back to the beginning, and soars forward to the time when the groanings of creation shall be over, when the glory of the Lord, as it shines in creation, shall endure forever, and the Lord shall rejoice in His works.

The passage in Rev. 19, where the glorious word ALLELUIA is used more frequently than anywhere else in Scripture, refers, no doubt, to the beginning of "the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). These will, indeed, be "the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

Another coincidence may be mentioned. The two words "*Amen, Alleluia*" are, as we have said, Jewish, and being thus introduced together, lead to the conclusion that in connection with the events spoken of in Rev. 19, there

Digitized by Google

will be a manifestation of special mercy toward Israel. The Apocalypse is not intended, we believe, to give us details respecting Israel's future blessed condition, that having been so largely revealed in the Old Testament; still, we believe, that both Israel and Jerusalem are referred to in this book; but into proof of this it is not desirable now to enter. We just ask attention to one passage in Isaiah in connection with this in the Apocalypse; it is that remarkable prophecy which extends throughout chapters 24, 25, and 26. We read (25:2, 3), "Thou hast made of a city an heap; of a defenced city a ruin; a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built. Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee." In the next chapter, after describing in glowing language "the land of Judah," with its strong city, which has salvation for "walls and bulwarks," it is added, "He bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, He layeth it low; He layeth it low, even to the ground; He bringeth it even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor and the steps of the needy." How all this harmonizes with what is written in Rev. 18 of the overthrow of Babylon the Great, any attentive reader may easily trace. In both cases this overthrow is accompanied with songs of rejoicing, and followed by the triumphs of truth and righteousness. The closing chapters of Jeremiah also connect the downfall of Babylon with the full and permanent blessing of Israel (see Jer. 50:1–8).

The more diligently we search into and compare the Scriptures, the more clearly will it be manifested that the return of the bridegroom, the marriage of the Lamb, the destruction of Babylon, the judgment of Antichrist, the restoration of Israel, the universal kingdom, and the restoration of creation, are all closely connected. And when this glorious consummation shall have come, the universe will resound with AMEN; ALLELUIA.

Let us seek to make a personal and practical application of this subject. It is of the greatest importance that we should now learn this blessed song, and that we should be frequently rehearsing it. If we would do so, we should study the subject under the various aspects in which it is here presented to us. And, first, let us notice the *meaning* of these two words and the *order* in which they are placed. No doubt when we sing these words with all the redeemed family, there will be a depth of meaning realized in them, and an outflow of joy while uttering them, of which we have now no adequate conception. But we may see much in them now; we may feel strong consolation, and enjoy true worship as we use them, even amidst all the discords and din of earth, and while we groan in this our earthly tabernacle.

A good old writer on the word "AMEN," says, "when prefixed to an assertion, it signifies 'assuredly, certainly,' or, emphatically, '*so it is.*' But when, as in Matt. 6:13, it concludes a prayer, whether longer or shorter, '*so be it,*' or '*so let it be,*' is its manifest import. In the former case it is assertive, in the latter case it is *petitionary.*" Mr. Saphir, in his admirable work on the Lord's Prayer, observes, "Few consider the deep meaning, the great solemnity, and the abundant consolation treasured up in this word, which has formed for centuries the conclusion of the prayers and praises of God's people." He then dwells upon it under seven different aspects: 1. A word of venerable history in Israel and the Church; 2. It announces God's truth and faithfulness; 3. It is a name of Christ; 4. It is a seal of prayer; 5. The voice of faith; 6. The answer of a good conscience; 7. A renewal of our dedication to God.

The meaning of the word "*Alleluia*" is "praise ye Jehovah." The incommunicable name and the creature's highest happiness are thus connected. God's great purpose is thus fulfilled. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." They who trust in Christ are "to the praise of His glory."

Amen is *believing acquiescence* in God's will; and Alleluia is loving adoration of His excellencies. We must say "Amen" to what Christ has done, and to what God has said; we must set to our seal that God is true, leave off thinking our own thoughts, and speaking our own words, before we can really delight ourselves in the Lord, and praise Him with our

Digitized by Google

whole hearts. Something, too, must precede that habitual "Amen," that believing acquiescence and childlike submission which God loves to see in His people. Only believers can really say "Amen," as God loves to hear it said. There must first be acceptance in the Beloved, then the Spirit of God's Son crying Abba, Father, and *Amen* is sure to follow.

"Faith makes us less than children, more than men;
It makes the soul cry 'Abba' and 'Amen.'"

Who that has ever listened, has not felt his soul somewhat stirred when the echoes of an "Amen" from a cathedral choir has swept round its old aisles, and died softly away in its carved roof. A little reflection produces sadness, as you begin to fear there was little if any true devotion in the harmonious sound. Believer, let thy *Amen* be forthcoming *now*. God listens to hear it. He loves that His children should agree with Himself, and also with that Sent One, who not only came with His precious "*verilies*," but who is Himself the great "AMEN," confirming all God's words, and responding to all His will; at once the infinite object for our faith, and its one perfect exemplar.

All His life was one grand, unfaltering, harmonious AMEN. In Gethsemane, with the cup of woe at His lips, He still said "Amen." On the cross His heart repeated it every moment, and His lips crowned all their wondrous utterances with "*It is finished!*" This mighty word (for it is but one in the original) will roll on forever and ever, and be the keynote of the anthems of eternity. His joy who uttered it shall be proportionate to His obedience unto death; His Alleluia shall be as lofty as his Amen was deep. Would you, believer, be like Him? would you share His joy even now? Then seek grace to imitate Him in His complete acquiescence in the whole will of God. We are redeemed to this, and we shall rise to it eternally; but let us seek to realize it now, as regards the way of salvation, the path of obedience, and the dispensations of Providence. Concerning all things let our language be, "Even so, Father. Amen and Amen."

Thus shall we be trained for the worship of heaven. What an "Amen" was that which John heard, when the heaven was opened and a voice said, "Come up hither!" "The four living ones said, Amen." This was indeed worship—intelligent and adoring, most acceptable to God. And the song which preceded the Amen was worthy of such a chorus. It was a song sung by the redeemed and angelic hosts, joined in by "every creature in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea;" a song anticipative of Emmanuel's triumph, of the Church's glory, and of earth's blessedness; and the Amen was a testimony to the divine faithfulness.

And the song shall be sung again triumphantly, when the work thus anticipated shall be completely accomplished; when He who sitteth on the throne in order to make all things new, shall say, "IT IS DONE!" Then the loud Amen shall sound through the universe, and all heaven shall join in the triumphant song, "ALLELUIA, FOR THE LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH."

This great word "ALLELUIA," as already remarked, occurs several times in Rev. 19: 1–8; and we may profitably consider it under three distinct aspects.

There is, first, *the "Alleluia" growing out of a conviction of the righteousness of God's procedure.* The voice of much people in heaven is heard saying, "Alleluia, for true and righteous are His judgments." (See vers. 2, 3.) These are awful words, but they come from sinless lips, and are accepted by a holy God. "His right hand is full of righteousness," whether it lifts up the feeble, or casts down the proud. "The Lord is known by the judgment that He executeth;" and, therefore, "the righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance." The judgment here spoken of is described in the preceding chapter. It refers to the great harlot, even Babylon, that city of abominations, the centre of this world's greatness, and the object of its admiration. The corrupt and corrupting system represented by the degrading symbol of a harlot is swept wholly away; it sinks as a millstone in the deep waters to rise no more. Some suppose

Digitized by Google

that this doomed, because most degraded, city means a corrupt ecclesiastical system; but the whole description seems rather to refer to some unexampled development of human greatness and worldly splendor, in which all pride, wickedness, and cruelty will have full scope. This huge and fearful conglomeration of evil will be connected with Antichrist and his ten kings; after being first their seat of power, and then the object of their hatred (Rev. 17 : 16), it will perish like them by the stroke of God. But we enter not into details. There is a general principle applying to all times and places, and especially applying to Christendom at the end of the age; which is, that God will be glorified by the judgments which He brings on those whom He has so long borne with. The time is coming when God's long-suffering will wait no longer. He will no more beseech men to be reconciled; His people will no longer be the ministers of reconciliation. Then mercy will be silent, and justice will speak in thunder tones; the olive-branch will be laid aside, and the rod of iron employed. Then, when earth shall shake like an aspen leaf under the heavy strokes of God, millions of sinless beings will approve His acts with "Amen; Alleluia! Thou hast rightly judged!" The time for *this* Alleluia is not yet come. Now is the time for mourning and for labors of love, for fervent appeal and tender expostulation. Knowing the terribleness of the storm that is coming, let us point out the refuge and urge all to fly into it. God will indeed be glorified hereafter in the condemnation of His enemies; but He can glorify Himself now in the salvation of the very worst of sinners.

2. *There will be the Alleluia growing out of the contemplation of the consummation of God's purposes of grace,*—When the wicked shall be silent in darkness, when no tongue will be able to charge God with injustice; but when He will be justified and praised by all holy beings; then a still louder chorus of praise shall be heard celebrating the grandest event of all—"Alleluia! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." These glorious words refer to *earth*. In heaven God has always reigned, but then His "kingdom shall come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This world has long been under the usurped power of a mighty and malevolent being; but the prince of this world shall be cast out, the reign of evil beasts (Dan. 7) shall come to an end, and the reign of the Lamb begin. "The kingdoms of this world shall be the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever." Many glorious predictions will then be made good, exceeding great and precious promises will be fulfilled. All Israel will be saved; the nations will be blessed; and, presiding over all, as associated with Christ, will be "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," thus fulfilling the ancient prediction, "A king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment;" "The Lord of hosts shall reign on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously" (Isa. 32 : 1; 24 : 25); and realizing the anticipative song of Rev. 5: 9, 10, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." How great will be the Alleluias of rapturous joy when this consummation shall have come! This song is likened to the "voice of many waters," the same grand figure that is used of the voice of the Lord Jesus in Rev. 1 : 15. Then the "AMEN" and "ALLELUIA" of the redeemed shall correspond, according to their measure, with that of the Redeemer. They shall enter into His joy, though He will be anointed, as He is worthy to be, with the oil of gladness above His fellows.

Lastly, *There will be the Alleluia of complacent rest, in communion with the manifested glory of God.* "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God!" "OUR God!" What a claim is this! and what a full realization of interest in Him and of being His inheritance is here included! Then will the full import of the words of Jesus be entered into—"My Father and your Father; my God and your God;" and the wondrous promise will be made good to every overcomer—"I will be his God, and he shall be my son." The words before us are gloriously abrupt, "ALLELUIA! SALVATION!" (Rev. 19 : 1.) Would it be right to consider each of

Digitized by Google

these words as a separate exclamation? First, the full heart cries out, "*Praise ye Jehovah!*" praise Him for His greatness!—praise Him for His goodness! praise Him especially for *salvation!* It is come in fulness as regards soul and body; "the salvation ready to be revealed," is revealed. The Lord hath "appeared to them that looked for Him the second time, without sin, unto salvation." We had it in hope on earth; we now have it in possession. Saved from sin, death, and hell; saved at an infinite expense; let the praise be given to God and the Lamb forever! Thus the deep adoring gratitude and holy wonder of millions will find utterance in that one mighty, melodious word, "SALVATION."

Then comes "*glory*"—the "salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." Saved to the highest glory, and God glorified in the highest thereby, what praises will such a salvation call forth! All "*honor*" will be given unto God, and all will be traced to His mighty working, whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself. What communion with God will then be realized! and what complaisance in God will then be felt! Surely that which will be true of Israel below, will be emphatically true also of the glorified family above. "He will rest in His love; He will joy over thee with joy; He will rejoice over thee with singing." Even so, Lord Jesus; come quickly. Let Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

AMEN; ALLELUIA!

BE READY.

CHURCH of the living God! hast thou heard the voice which spoke from heaven, "Surely I come quickly?" And hast thou responded to it gladly, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus?" Does his absence now lie heavily upon thy spirit? Does the promise of his return cheer thee? And is the thought of his speedy coming a most welcome hope in these days, when men's hearts are failing them for fear? Then how is this prospect operating? Is it full of quickening, animating, stimulating power? Is it kindling up your love into greater warmth? Is it increasing the intensity of your earnestness? Is it making the separation between you and the world a more decided thing? Is it imparting a deeper solemnity to your deportment, and attaching an unutterable importance to every word and action? Is it rebuking idleness, and sloth, and vanity, and frivolity, and levity, and selfishness? Has it uprooted and destroyed in you covetousness and worldliness, those two master-sins of the evil age? And has it made you liberal and generous, enlarging your heart to give,—to give with no sparing hand so long as the time remaineth? Ah brethren in Christ, we are surely far behind! Our religion is a poor, second-rate, ineffective thing! We are dreaming when we should be working; we are pleasing self and indulging the flesh when we should be serving the Lord. We are indolent and yielding when we should be energetic and indomitable. We are shrinking and fastidious when we should be resolute and hardy. We sit idly in our tents, with weapons sheathed and banners folded, when we should be in the thickest of the fight, for the world's last conflict is begun, and the armies are mustering for the battle of the great day of God Almighty.

And you, ye men of the earth, whose portion is not among the things unseen, have you heard the voice that speaks to YOU from heaven,—"Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come?" Has the warning pierced your ears and broken your mad security? How long do you count it safe to remain unreconciled? And what short of reconciliation with God will avail you in the day when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth? And when is he to arise? Have you ascertained the time, that you sit so easy and unalarmed? The long-pent-up winds are beginning to break loose; and the sudden bursts of tempest that have overswept the earth, these few years past, are precursors of the world's last desolating storm. At present there is a lull, but it will be brief; and behind that lull there is the more terrible tempest; and behind that tempest there is the Judge of quick and dead; and behind the Judge there are the everlasting burnings! Has this prospect no terrors for you, and have these terrors no urgency to compel you to consider the overwhelming necessity of be-

Digitized by Google

taking yourselves to the provided shelter, ere another day, with all its gloomy uncertainties, shall have dawned upon you?

Are you ready? Are you hidden in the clefts of that rock to which no weapon, no storm, no fire can reach? He alone is safe who has reached the hiding-place; and that hiding-place stands with its unfolded gates ready to receive you now. Will you enter? Or will you remain without? Remain without, and perish in the fiery storm!—"For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood, but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire." It is now, in these last days, as in the days of Noah. God's purpose of vengeance has been declared, the warning has come, and the judgment is making haste to follow. But the ark is still open, and the preacher of righteousness beckons you in. For one hundred and twenty years Noah preached, but the unheeding world heard him not. Then he entered the ark, and for seven days he remained there before the deluge came, and standing at the open door of the ark he delivered God's last message of grace, entreating men to come in. It seems as if we were now in the period corresponding to these seven last days,—proclaiming God's last loving message to long-resisting man! For what, then, are you waiting? Are you lingering in the hope that the millennial day will softly steal in upon the world, and that then you will be converted with all the rest? Alas for you! Do you not know that between you and that glory there lies a region as dark as midnight, and strewed with terrors such as earth has not yet witnessed? Why, then, do you wait without? There is room enough within, and will you not go in and occupy it? There is love enough, and will you not go in and taste it? There is blessedness enough, and will you not go in and enjoy it? It will cost you nothing; and you are welcome! The Father bids you welcome; and the Son bids you welcome; and the Spirit bids you welcome; and angels bid you welcome; and every saved one bids you welcome; and with so many welcomes will you still hesitate or delay? Child of sin and sorrow, are you ready?

Editorial.

THE UNCROWNING OF KINGS.

"Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble at every moment."—EZEK. 26 : 16.

How do the mighty fall! If we cast our eyes over the last seventy years, what a list of discrownings, and ejectments from the places of power and greatness, do we behold! In 1801, the French took possession of Tuscany, and expelled the Grand Duke and Duchess. The latter died shortly afterwards in exile, and under melancholy circumstances. In 1802, the same enemies deprived the Dukes of Parma and Modena of their thrones, and Piedmont shared the same fate. In 1806, Naples was absorbed into the French Empire, and the King and Queen went into exile. Next year, "the House of Braganza ceased to reign" in Portugal, and soon afterward the royal family of Spain were retired. In 1809, the cruel divorce and deposition of the Empress Josephine took place, and in the same year Gustavus IV of Sweden was deposed by his own subjects. Between 1810 and 1815, all the thrones granted to the Bonaparte family reverted to prior occupants or their representatives, and Napoleon himself, together with "Austria's mournful flower," disappeared from the scene. The next victim was Queen Caroline, of England (in 1820), divorced by the sensual George IV. In 1824, Iturbide, Emperor of Mexico, experienced the terrible vicissitudes of fortune. In 1830, Charles X, of France, did the same, and was followed by Louis Philippe, in 1848. Their sons and grandsons are still sighing for the Tuileries. In 1867, Maximilian experienced in Mexico the fate of Iturbide. It is but yesterday that the Imperial throne of

Digitized by Google

France was occupied by a man who was generally credited with being astute and fortunate above most men, and one of the mightiest of the earth. By his side sat a lady renowned for her beauty, grace, and lavish charity, the acknowledged and undisputed leader and arbiter of fashion, "the observed of all observers." Where are they now? The one a prisoner, the other an exile. But is her position so lamentable as that of another Empress, the daughter of the wise Leopold of Belgium? Eugenie has her reason left to her, together with her husband and son, whom Europe may yet find it a necessary measure of safety to restore to their authority, but Carlotta has lost all that can render life enjoyable. She has become "the queen of a fantastic realm," and that, too, in the prime of life, with the one terrible catastrophe ever present to her shattered mind! In wide contrast with both of these unfortunate ladies is the Ex-Queen of Spain. Regardless of the wants and wishes of her people, and caring chiefly for her own gratification, Isabella is justly punished by being driven from her throne, unattended by "all that should accompany old age—as honor, love, obedience, troops of friends."

These royal exiles have other companions in trouble. There are the ex-King and ex-Queen of Greece—Otho of Bavaria and Mary of Oldenburg—who may sigh over disappointed hopes, the former being left to lament his inability to control a turbulent people and restrain the cupidity of his counsellors; the latter to find that all her romantic aspirations for the regeneration of the Hellenic race were but "the baseless fabric of a vision," and have "left not a rack behind." There are the ex-King and ex Queen of Naples, the one the last male sovereign of the Bourbon family who occupied a throne in Europe (Isabella of Spain being the last female), and the other young, attractive, and high-spirited, scarcely married two years before the sword of Garibaldi drove her and her husband out of their country. Shortly before that achievement, the Italian liberators, with the aid of France, drove the Austrians out of Lombardy, but, in so doing, they also expelled the Duke and Duchess of Modena, the Duchess of Parma, and the Grand Duke of Tuscany, all but one of whom live to remember their departed greatness. The ex-King and ex-Queen of Hanover must be added to the list of the living discrowned heads. Their fall, however, was due to the ambition of Prussia, and they have the satisfaction of knowing that it was not owing to the desire of their subjects to get rid of them.

"Thus saith the Lord God: Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is, and I will give it Him." (Ezek. 21 : 26, 27.)

THE END.

We have reached the last of our issues for 1870. The year was ominously begun, and it closes still more ominously. If people will persist in unbelief and self-security, they are without excuse. Everything is full of warning, earth, air, sea, sky, the affairs of nations, and the very stones and timbers of men's dwellings, night and day, with ever-increasing portent, are crying out to every one that hath ears to hear, or eyes to see, or sensibilities to feel, that "the end of all things is at hand." Some flatter themselves that all is well; that Napoleon is now effectually put out of the way, as the suspected Antichrist; that the Pope is being humbled; that Protestant arms are taking possession of the world; that freedom is on the ascendant; that man's day of glorious earthly triumph and blessedness is dawning; and that these old predictions of coming catastrophe are no longer to be regarded. Deluded people! The great doctrines of prophecy are not affected by what may be Napoleon's fate. The Antichrist is not manifested till after Christ's waiting people are "caught up to meet the Lord in the heaven." "Then shall that wicked be revealed." Whether it be Napoleon, or some one else, remains to be seen. Meanwhile, God's word forewarns of wars and rumors of wars, of distress of nations with perplexity, of strange and mighty overturnings and runnings to and fro, of startling phenomena in the heavens, and agitations in earth, air, and seas, of outbreaking wickedness and perilous times, of waning faith and growing iniquity, as the signs and tokens of the oncoming judgment. Are these not here? Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and repent!

Digitized by Google

THE

PROPHETIC TIMES.

A Monthly Serial

OF

SACRED LITERATURE AND CURRENT EVENTS,
TOUCHING THE COMING AND KINGDOM OF THE LORD JESUS
AND RELATED SUBJECTS.

EDITED BY

REV. DRS. SEISS, NEWTON, AND OTHERS.

VOL. IX.

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."—1 PET. 5 : 4.

P. O. Box 2245.
PHILADELPHIA:
SHERMAN & CO., PRINTERS.
1871.

Digitized by Google

"Behold, I come quickly."

REV. 22 : 12.

Stir up, we beseech Thee, Thy power, O Lord, and come; that by Thy protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins, and saved by Thy mighty deliverance.—*Advent Collect of the Ancient Church.*

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

REV. 22 : 20.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS OF VOLUME IX.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

	PAGE
Church Establishment,	1
The Restitution,	3
What of the Night?	17
David their King,	21
My Times are in Thy Hand,	21
Believers that Never Die,	33
Cumulative Fulfilments of Prophecy,	35
Suffering for Christ,	49
Promises to those who Overcome,	54
Preaching the Advent,	65
Perpetuity of the Earth,	66
Spiritualizing the Prophecies,	69
Enthusiasm,	81
The Holy City,	86
How Long (Poetry),	90
Death and Translation,	113
The Rebuked Nations,	116
The Prophecies of Isaiah,	129
Grievous Wolves,	133
The Prophecies of Isaiah,	145
That Day,	150
The Intermediate State,	153
The Doom of Babylon (Poetry),	158
The Prophecies of Isaiah,	177
The Magicians of Egypt,	180

SELECTIONS.

	PAGE
The Second Advent,	7
Hiding in the Day of Wrath,	9
The Glorious Appearing,	22
Thou hast Left thy First Love,	38
Waiting for the Light,	42
That Blessed Hope,	58
The Last Trumpet,	70
The Song of Songs,	73
The Righteous Reign (Poetry),	75
The Mystery of Creation,	91
What Time is It?	93
The Kingdom of Christ,	100
The Ancient Prophets,	118
Christ's at His Coming,	122
The Man of Sin,	137
The Impending Crisis,	158
Signs of the Times,	160
The Blessed Watcher,	161
Look at the Bright Side,	165
Watch or Wail,	169
Christianity and the Advent,	182
The Age We Live In,	183
Serpents in the Home-Nest,	183
Roman Catholic Testimony,	184
The Christian's Attitude (Poetry),	185

Digitized by Google

EDITORIAL.

	PAGE
Napoleon,	13
Paul and the Judgment,	28
Preaching Christ Crucified,	32
The Bride,	43
For and With,	59
The Easter Song,	76
Tomb of the Maccabees,	80
That Falling Away First,	101
The Eagle in Heaven,	105
Vanity Fair,	108
Take the Safe Side,	111
Society Under the Sixth Trumpet,	124
Read Isaiah,	142
The Word of the Lord,	143
Lectures on the Apocalypse,	170
The Little Book,	170
A Needless Fear,	173
Too Hard for Them,	174
How We are Progressing,	175
No Continuing City,	186
Let no Man Deceive You,	190
Resurrection of the Redeemed,	191

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. IX. JANUARY, 1871. No. 1.

Special Contributions.

CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT.

SINCE the days of Constantine almost the uniform development of the Church has been in the line of the endeavor to establish for herself a name and place in the earth. Her spiritual life has indeed often broken over and broken down the walls of time-honored creeds and systems. But the new sect that may have arisen has commonly repeated the old experience, and sought to perpetuate its existence in denominational form and through an organized body. And it is remarkable in how many instances the original life has become cramped and weakened by the trammels of system. It has been an almost universal law that corruption has come in with aggregation. And especially has this been the case where any Church has sought or accepted the aid of the state in this effort to establish herself as a power in the world.

Now what is the reason of this? If it be the design of God, as we are so often told, that His Church should take possession of the world in His name and endeavor to subject it to His control, why does not His blessing attend these efforts on her part to settle herself down to this occupation and subsidization of the resources of this world for Christ? Why may she not lawfully seize hold of and use for Him all the avenues of power through which men and communities are influenced? Why should she not seek to dispose of the wealth, the offices and emoluments of society in her service?

The plain scriptural answer to all this is that God does not desire and has made no provision for such *establishment* of His Church in this dispensation. His Word declares that Satan is "prince of this world" and "god of this age." It promises his overthrow. It holds out to the Church the blessed hope of her Lord's appearing to bruise Satan, the author of all physical and moral evil, under her feet. But until then she must be, like Israel in the desert, a pilgrim and a warrior; "afflicted and tempest-tossed." To seek to establish herself in "this present evil world" and to possess herself of a name and heritage in it, is to repeat Israel's adulterous alliance with Moab and Midian in the desert. And the prophets who urge her to this abandonment of her hope and her calling, which is not to reign in this world that crucified her Lord, but over the world to come, are repeating the sin of Balaam, who made Israel to sin. (Rev. 2:14.)

This then is the reason why God withholds His blessing from all attempts to set up His kingdom on the earth, before His time. The Roman Church, which has just crowned a long career of folly and of blasphemy in this direction by the arrogant, yet consistent, assumption that its Head is infallible, is the most conspicuous instance in point. But Protestant Christendom is by no means free from this sin. Its history is almost as full of providential warnings and rebukes of the great and criminal mistake of supposing that the kingdom of God can ever take possession of this world as at present constituted, or find upon the earth a suitable platform on which to erect itself, before her Lord shall arise to judge it. (Ps. 82:8.) And this we believe has been the

Digitized by Google

great weakness of her missionary efforts. They have too often been begun and prosecuted on this false basis. It has, for example, long been the effort and almost the vain boast, of the Evangelical Church in these United States, that she intended to take possession of this land for Christ. And with what success? The census of 1860 revealed the fact that the proportion of members of all evangelical denominations in this country was less than in 1850. There had been increase, but only of about twenty-eight per cent, while the population had increased about thirty-two. The world had gained upon the Church, or to use the language of an intelligent anti-Millenarian brother who made the examination, and reported to the writer this result, "This country is relapsing into infidelity." If we mistake not, the census of 1870 will show no better result. In the narrative of the State of Religion, read before the Synod of New Jersey at its last meeting in October, it was stated, as the result of an elaborate and minute investigation of the statistics of all the leading denominations in that state, that while its population had increased in the last decade about forty per cent, the growth of the churches was much behind this. No more favored portion of the country for such a comparison could be selected. Here then we have the Lord's signal rebuke of the vain pretence of conquering for Him a kingdom in this world. It was never meant that His Church should be anything more than a toiler and a stranger in a world that disowned Him and necessitated its own future judgment, when its princes hung Him on a cross. And she should be ashamed to strive for any crown here other than the one which she shall one day receive from her Lord's own hands.

And so far as the foreign missionary work has been stimulated by this vain hope of the "conversion of the world" before the Lord come to bind and cast out its Prince (Rev. 20 ch.), it has been vitiated. The Lord indeed often blesses the labors of His servants even where there is ignorance of His purposes and misapprehension of that "sure word" in which they are revealed. He can bear much with the mistakes of His children, and even work with them for the salvation of men where the heart is right. And yet if the apprehension of the truth be faulty, the result must be thereby marred and hindered. We have not the least doubt that far greater triumphs would have been witnessed on the foreign field as also at home, if our missionaries had regarded themselves as sent of God to visit the Gentiles "to take out of them a people for His name" (Acts 15: 14), and if they had preached to them the *gospel of the kingdom* as well as of the grace of God. The first missionaries that went out from Pentecost preached to the nations the kingdom of God, and the gospel of His grace as a preparation for it. They baptized their converts into the hope of a kingdom to be realized, not by a slow process of conversion of the nations, but to be revealed, with its Lord, from Heaven, and to be bestowed not upon a world all converted and waiting for it, but upon a little flock, who amid the darkness and wickedness of a world that knows not God, and desires not the knowledge of His ways, patiently wait and suffer for it. We are quite sure that if our modern missionaries had put "that blessed hope" of Christ's appearing, into the same place of prominence in their preaching as did the Apostles, and if the Church at home had proposed to herself not to reap this world-wide harvest, but to gather her sheaf of first fruits, the pledge and harbinger of the coming harvest when the Lord shall put in the sickle, and as an offering to be presented to Him on that day of glory (1 Thess. 1: 19.); far greater blessing would have been witnessed abroad, and far less of this poverty and languor with which the work is sustained at home. And here again, although it is with sorrow that we allude to the facts, we have an instructive example at hand.

Some months ago the Presbyterian Church in this country consummated its reunion. On every hand great expectations were aroused of the work it was to do at home and abroad. Was it not nearer the realization of its idea of the Kingdom of God? Had it not become a greater power in the land and in the world?

Digitized by Google

Now, the reunion may have been right, so far as it was a testimony to the world that all Christians are one in Christ, but so far as it was fostered and brought about by the desire of a great Church establishment (we use the word in no technical sense), deriving power in the world from weight of numbers or the aggregation of wealth and talent, so far, in other words, as the false idea that it is the Church's mission now to set up a kingdom of God on earth, and to aid its universal triumph by such means and agencies, so far the spirit that prompted it was not from above. And that this secular spirit did enter, as an element, into the result, cannot be denied. That it was relied upon as a great stimulant to missionary enterprise was openly confessed,—and what has been thus far the result? The *Presbyterian* of November 12th, gives the statement of the Treasurer of its Foreign Board, that the six months of reunion have brought one-third less funds into its treasury than the corresponding months one year ago, when it was supported by the Old School branch alone; that its burden is largely increased by the transfer to it of missions from the American Board, and that, with liabilities of more than $136,000, there are no funds to meet them. Is not this the Lord's rebuke to that betrayal of the gospel of His kingdom which looks for its establishment in this dispensation by the erection and diffusion of great church systems, and supplants the blessed hope of His appearing in the minds of men by a delusive dream of the world's conversion.

L. C. B.

"THE RESTITUTION."*

ACTS 3: 21.

IN our last article, we called attention to the restitution of the human race, living upon the earth at the close of the millennium, and showed, that then all mankind, all nations, would be by the merits of Christ's death, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, restored to a state of perfect holiness, like Adam and Eve when created in the image of God. All sin removed, and perfect holiness restored, there can be no curse; and consequently, *no death;* and therefore the restored nations of the earth in the body, at the end of the millennial age, will be immortal, as our first parents would have been had they not eaten the forbidden fruit. Then the divine declaration will be fulfilled, "There shall be no more curse."

As the Lord God, the second person of the Trinity, visited Adam and Eve in innocence, and walked with them amid the bowers of Eden; so will He again, as the God-man, dwell with the restituted nations and walk with them upon the earth renewed, for, "His tabernacle is to be with men, and He is to dwell with them." He will then "reign in Jerusalem, and in Mount Zion, and before His ancients gloriously, and all nations of the earth will bring gifts and presents unto Him."

In this restituted state of holiness in which immortality will be the attribute of the nations; the command given to Adam and Eve in innocence, but never fulfilled by them in that state, will *then* be fulfilled, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." Then the holy inhabitants of the earth will multiply, and have children born in holiness—born in the image of God—children who will never sin, and consequently never die, but be immortal. "There shall be no more death, for the former things have passed away."

And here we began to prove the everlasting increase of our race—that in the restituted or holy condition, the race in the flesh, will multiply generation after generation, ages without end. We examined God's covenant with Noah, and found that the phrase, "Unto perpetual generations," teaches strongly and positively, that generation shall succeed generation during eternal ages. We now proceed, as promised, to examine farther the teachings of Scripture,

* It will be important for the reader to bear in mind, that this article treats of mankind in the flesh, and of generations dwelling upon earth, and not of the children of the resurrection, or of the glorified saints in heaven. The latter, as the Saviour has very explicitly taught us, "neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God." But the argument of the author has reference to continuous generations upon the earth and in the earthly life.—*Ed.*

Digitized by Google

showing that the increase of the human race will be eternal.

The next proof we notice, is God's covenant with Abram, Gen. 12: 14–16: "And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward, and eastward and westward; for *all the land*, which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy *seed forever*. And I will make thy seed as the *dust* of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy *seed* also be numbered." Now, *this land*, is given by God to Abram, and his seed *forever:* that is, to eternity; for such is the meaning of the phrase "*forever*" in the covenant. And as Abram's seed, which means generation after generation, according to the Hebrew phrase, are to possess it *forever*, so are they to multiply *forever*. This is the grand and glorious idea, so vigorously and expressively set forth in these words of the God of the covenant: "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth." The great promise here is manifestly thou shalt have children, and thy children shall have children, and thy children's children shall have children,—generation shall succeed generation, even as long as they shall possess the land, which shall be "*forever*," or to eternity. How else can this covenant be fulfilled? And if Abram's children begin to multiply in the restituted creation, it is never said, nor even hinted, that that multiplying shall cease; but that according to the terms of the covenant it shall continue "*forever;*" even forever. How else could his seed become numerous as the dust of the earth, the sand upon the seashore, and the stars of the sky? which implies a countless multitude, a multitude not to be numbered, a multitude which shall increase forever.

This may appear a strange doctrine to those who have been taught, that God will come and judge the nations and burn up the earth, and the increase of the race shall cease. But this teaching, common as it may be, is not the teaching of the Bible, as we have seen in a former article; for this earth, once renewed, once "restituted," will remain in this restituted condition forever; and be the place for the perpetual generations of men. To this grand and glorious result, according to the teachings of revelation, all the plans and purposes of creation and redemption are tending; and therefore, whoever studies and understands the holy oracles, will not consider the perpetual increase of the race a strange doctrine.

It is also clearly taught in God's eternal covenant with Abraham, that he shall be the father of many nations. Gen. 22:5–8,—"Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram; but thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of *many nations* will I make thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and will make nations of thee; and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an *everlasting covenant*, to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession." Let it be observed, the covenant is an *everlasting*, or *eternal* covenant, made not merely with Abraham, but also with the *nations* of whom he is to be the father,—the nations which are to come out of him. And why is this covenant *eternal*, but that it may be coeval with the nations that are to come out of him; consequently, according to the very nature of the covenant, the successive generations of the nations must be eternal. But the covenant is also established with his seed after him, in their generations for an everlasting covenant. Now, it is manifest, that the words, "*generation*" and "*everlasting*," are synonyms, or words having the same signification as regards duration; consequently if the covenant made with the generations of Abraham's seed, is *eternal*, so also are the *generations eternal;* and its blessings are to be eternal blessings, bestowed upon the eternal generations as they come into existence. No matter how far down the ages of eternity you descend, the generations are still coming into being; and God's everlasting covenant is still in force with them, and its blessings are still being bestowed upon them; and when countless generations more have come into ex-

Digitized by Google

istence, God's everlasting covenant will still be with these generations, fresh as when made with Abraham, or when God began its fulfilment; and thus the covenant will be to *eternal generations;* and to these generations, according to that covenant, God will be their God. The covenant is made with the generations of His seed *forever;* that these endless generations may have the assurance of the everlasting covenant that He will be their God forever, and that in their restituted condition, they will never forsake Him, and He will never cast them off. The covenant teaches and secures the endless generations, and the endless friendship between God and these generations, which proves the *everlasting increase* of the race.

This same doctrine is also taught in God's covenant with Isaac (Gen. 26: 3, 4), and also in God's covenant with Jacob (chap. 28: 13–15), according to which their seed shall be as the dust of the earth, the stars of the sky, the sand upon the sea-shore; which are just expressions for endless or everlasting increase; and such expressions are of frequent occurrence in holy writ. But we must pass on to the consideration of others, in which the great and glorious doctrine, the *everlasting* increase, *the fruit* of the infinite value of the atonement, is set forth.

Ps. 37: 28, 29,—"For the Lord loveth judgment and forsaketh not His saints; they are preserved forever; but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off; the righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein *forever.*" It is here declared that the seed of the wicked shall be cut off: that is, that they shall not multiply upon the new earth; but the saints shall be preserved forever on the earth; which is a declaration that their seed shall multiply on the earth forever. They are the righteous, and the promise is, they shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever, and as their seed is not to be cut off, generation must succeed generation *forever.* Ps. 45: 17,—"I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations, therefore shall the people praise thee forever and ever." The name to be remembered is the King, the Lord Jesus Christ. In all generations is more expressive in the Hebrew, which is "in every generation and generation," which is their mode of expressing *eternal generations.* And if any doubt could exist with regard to this, the subsequent verse sweeps it utterly away: "Therefore, nations shall give thee thanks *forever* and *ever.*" Nations on the earth during the King's reign, manifestly implies generations; these, according to the teaching of the promise to the King, forever coming into existence, shall forever and ever as they come praise Him. This is surely the manifest and only meaning of the passage.

There are passages teaching this glorious doctrine scattered throughout the Bible, upon which we might comment from early dawn till latest eve. We will only call attention to a few. Ps. 72: 6,—"They shall fear thy name as long as the sun and moon endure throughout all generations," that is, to generation and generations; which is a Hebrewism for *eternal generations.* Ver. 17,—"His name shall endure *forever;* His name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in Him, and all nations shall call Him blessed" Here it is declared that His name shall endure forever, and that while His name endures, all nations shall call Him blessed; but nations implies successive generations; and consequently, *generations are to endure* as long as His name, which is *forever.* 103: 17,—"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children," or sons of sons. Here it is declared the mercy of the Lord is *eternal;* and children's children is equivalent, expressive of successive generations, must also be eternal, or if the Lord's righteousness be everlasting unto children's children, then must these generations also be everlasting.

"From eternity enduring
To eternity, the Lord,
Still His people's bliss insuring,
Keeps His covenanted word.
Yea, with truth and righteousness,
Children's children He will bless."

Ps. 135: 13,—"Thy name, O Lord, endureth *forever;* and thy memorial, O, Lord, throughout all generations;" or to generations and gen-

Digitized by Google

erations. The enduring of the Lord's Name, and the successive generations are declared to be of equal duration. If then the Lord's Name is to endure forever, so are the generations of men, or rather the generations have to endure forever, and the memorial of the Lord has to endure as long as they. Ps. 145 : 13,—"Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and thy Dominion endureth throughout all generations," or, as it might have been more literally rendered: "Thy kingdom is a kingdom of *all eternities;* and thy ruling in all generation and generation." Here the duration of the Kingdom is declared to be *eternal* in the strongest language; and the generation and generation are its parallel or coequal in duration, and therefore, if the kingdom is to endure forever, so *is generation to succeed generation forever.* If the eternal succession of the race be denied, so must the eternal duration of the kingdom. But His kingdom has to endure forever; and of the increase of that kingdom, which must include the multiplication of its people, there is to be no end. In many places we find to generation and generation, and all generations, and such like phrases, put as equivalents to Christ's eternal reign; and consequently, if that reign be eternal, so must the succession of the generations.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever." (Isa. 9 : 6, 7.) Here it is said that Christ shall sit upon the throne of David and upon His kingdom. David's throne and kingdom were on earth, consequently Christ's must be here. It is also declared that Christ will establish His throne and kingdom upon the earth *forever*, that is eternally, and that of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end. But, the increase of His government can mean only the multiplication of the subjects of His government or kingdom, and these being manifestly the human family, for they only are the inhabitants of earth, are they of whose increase there is to be no end, are they who are to multiply forever, and generation succeed generation eternally. This is manifestly the doctrine taught in the passage, and which it is declared the Lord will perform. And such is clearly the teaching of other passages. Chap. 51 : 8,—"My righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation." *Forever*, and from generation to generation, are used to express eternal duration; and consequently declare these generations shall be eternal. Chap. 59 : 21,—"This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put into thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of *thy seed*, nor out of the mouth of thy *seed's seed*, saith the Lord, from henceforth and *forever*." Here it is declared that there shall be *seed's seed*, or generations of generations *forever*, out of whose mouth the word of the Lord shall not depart forever. Chap. 60 : 15,—"Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man passed through thee, I will make thee an *eternal* excellency, the joy of *many* generations, or eternal generations." Chap. 66 : 22-23,—"For as the new heavens, and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name *remain*." As the new heavens and the new earth are to remain forever before the Lord, so shall the seed of men and their name remain; or generation succeed generation forever. Jer. 32: 39-40,—"And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me *forever*, for the good of them and of their children after them." God here declares that He will give them one heart, that they may fear Him, for their own good, and the good of their children *forever*; which proves that there shall be children after children, on the earth forever; and that these eternal generations will be all holy. Es. 37: 25-26,—"They shall dwell in the land I have given unto Jacob, my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children, and their chil-

Digitized by Google

dren's children, *forever.*" It is most clearly taught and declared in this passage, that they shall dwell in the land forever, but not more clearly than it is that their children shall have children, generation after generation forever, or that generation shall succeed generation unto perpetual generations.

It is added, "I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an *everlasting* covenant with them; I will place them and *multiply them*, and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them *forevermore.*" The covenant of peace which God here promises to make with Israel regathered is to be an *everlasting* covenant, a covenant to eternity, a covenant that shall never be broken; but secure peace to them with all its blessings *forever.* The covenant is, "He will place them in their own land *forevermore;*" that is, to eternity. When brought into that land they are never to go out, but abide *perpetually.* Also, He will *multiply* them for *evermore*, or eternally. Here God declares He will multiply or increase the human race; cause the succession of generation after generation forever in the clearest and strongest language. When He says He will multiply them forevermore, who dare say the increase of the race shall cease? Where does Scripture teach or even hint it shall? Nowhere, but proclaims a thousand times it shall be perpetuated forever. And thus will the seed of Jacob become, "as the stars of the sky, as the sand upon the sea-shore, and as the dust of the earth." If the "covenant of peace" with them, the placing them in their own land, the setting of His sanctuary in the midst of them, be for *evermore*, or to eternity, as manifestly they are, else language is without meaning; so also is the *multiplying of them forevermore—the successive generations of them forevermore.* Yes, while that sun careers through these heavens, and yonder moon walks in brightness amid the fair sisterhood of stars, while this earth renewed revolves chief in glory around the throne of God, and Christ and His saints reign upon it, which will be forevermore, so will the unglorified, but holy and immortal children of men multiply upon it eternally,—multiply "to perpetual generations."

The race in the flesh to God's image restored,
And endowed with a life death cannot destroy,
Shall bring forth a seed, all pure to the Lord,
Who ever shall live and exult in pure joy.

Generation succeed generation for aye,
And children be born through eternity's roll,
The command of Jehovah they'll ever obey,
And replenish the earth with the holy in soul.

All, all shall be holy as Adam was made,
When he stood in the glorious image of God;
And the increase of seed shall never be staid,
On earth, man's renewed and eternal abode.

J. H.

Selections.

THE SECOND ADVENT.

[By Bishop McIlvaine, *at the Clerical Meeting held at the house of* Rev. C. Herbert, *Oct.* 28, 1870.]

The crucial point in this investigation, is the question—*Does this Advent precede or follow the Millennium?* To answer this question we must appeal to New Testament evidence. I would also take in the prophet Daniel. And taking these for our guide there can be no doubt, I think, that the coming of Christ is everywhere treated apart from the fact of the Thousand Years' Reign. Another point we observe is the certainty of the *fact*, and the uncertainty of the *time*, of the Second Advent.

1. In the New Testament, the Second Advent is made a topic of *consolation.*

a. Of the Twelve Disciples (see John 14). The Divine Saviour is about to leave them. They are children, infants, in a hostile world. Every step of the way hitherto they have walked hand in hand with Christ. Now their heart is troubled at the prospect of losing their Guide—what then? "True, I am going away. It is

Digitized by Google

expedient for you . . . BUT . . . I will COME AGAIN." It is thus our Lord comforts His poor sorrowing disciples. They are to believe in Him as going away indeed (to carry on the work of the Church's High Priest), but as COMING AGAIN.

b. Of the Church generally (1 John 3 : 2.): "When He shall appear," &c. Here again the idea is that of comfort. The conclusion then is, that the coming of our Lord was introduced by Christ and His Apostles as the comfort of the Church.

II. Again, there is NOTHING BETWEEN! The mind of the disciples and the Church is directed at once to the Advent, without any intervening circumstance. Till we come to the Revelation of St. John, all points this way. "The Lord direct your hearts . . . into the patient waiting for Christ." "Looking for and hasting unto the Coming," &c. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

So, too, before Pentecost, when Jesus went up, the disciples were gazing into heaven, following Him with their eyes; their posture and attitude was one of EXPECTANCY—He is gone, but He will COME AGAIN. When? How soon?

"This same Jesus," said the angels, "which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." From all which I gather that we are to be on the mount of expectation for His appearing, when He shall come *from within the vail!* Under the Old Testament, when the High Priest went within the vail, it was *not to stop there.* He went in for special purposes, while the people stood without; but the people did not forget him; they were in waiting for the time when he should come out in his robes of beauty and glory to bless them. This was the consummation; this was their epiphany. Thus, Expectancy was the attitude of waiting Israel. We, too, have seen the High Priest go within the vail; but now we look for his return.

Such is the unbroken picture put before us on this subject. One thing only comes in to break it, and that is, "The Book of Revelation," with its definite period of a Thousand Years. This was written some time after, when the posture, and attitude, and habit of the Church was FIXED. The question then arises:

III. Is the Revelation of the Thousand Years brought in to change the Church's habit? Or,

Is it to be taken in harmonious connection and association with this habit?

If to correct, then, amongst other considerations, we should expect to find some intimation of this in an epistle like St. Peter's. The Church was then expecting. The expectation was already being scoffed at. St. Peter does not deny the point of the scoff, which is, that the Church is expecting; on the contrary, he silently evidences by his answer, that such is the case. But what is his answer to those who ask, "Where is the promise of his Appearing?" It is—Wait a little; "the Lord is not slack concerning His promise." "Your time is not the Lord's time." Nevertheless, it will come. There is, then, nothing, in the Apostle's words to modify or alter the Church's habit of EXPECTANCY.

And many other instances go to show that St. John's Revelation was written in harmony with that expectancy, and not to correct it by postponing its realization to the Millennium. Amongst these instances we note:

Matt. 25,—The advent there was sudden and unexpected. There was no prior event.

The Parable of the Tares. "Both grow till the harvest," &c.

The Parable of the Virgins, followed by the Parable of the Unjust Judge. The woman is the Church in Tribulation. Christ will come, though He "bear long," to *deliver* OUT *of tribulation, i. e.* prior to the Millennium.

Again, "As it was in the days of Noah"—unexpected—like lightning.

Lastly, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find *faith?*"

The end of the Church's tribulation is, Christ's personal Advent. *Then* He will deliver His Church.

NOTE.—The above statements of the venerable Bishop of Ohio. were made at a private conference in England. They were taken down thus in brief by one of the clergymen present, and published. We quote them from the *Standard of the Cross.* and rejoice to be privileged to give our readers the benefit of such testimony.—ED.

Digitized by Google

HIDING IN THE DAY OF WRATH.

ZEPHANIAH'S CALL TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

AT this moment we are threatened with tremendous scenes. Nations are armed with weapons, deadly, and destructive, and powerful, beyond any ever before used in battle; and they are bent on showing to one another the carnage they can create. Europe is shaken throughout; for it is a day of "men's hearts failing them for fear, and looking after the things that are coming on the earth." It is most reasonable, at such a time, to take up the ancient Prophets, reading in their books what the Lord spoke to His people, in times which to them were as terribly threatening as ours are to us. And one such occasion we find in opening the book of Zephaniah, who lived in the days of King Josiah.

Zephaniah, the son of Cushi, was sent to forewarn Judah of coming judgment; for, notwithstanding all that had been attempted and accomplished by the godly king, the nation was corrupt at heart, ripe for judgment, ready for the harvest of wrath, so that, after announcing what was about to come, in most alarming terms, chapter 1:18 closed with the words, "Neither their gold nor their silver shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy; for He shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land." And then came the ironical exhortation, "*Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together*, O nation not desired!" (2:1.) Form confederacies, mass your troops, bring all your resources to bear on the conflict, and do it at once, without delay: "before the decree bring forth (day is passing like the chaff!), before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you." Such is the prophet's message to the ungodly nation at large—the covenant-breaking nation, the Sabbath-breaking nation, the nation of formalists, the nation that, in real atheism, said, "The Lord will not do good, neither will He do evil;" the nation that, in thorough indifferency, joined idol-worship and Jehovah-worship, as if that were true toleration; the nation that showed its liberalism by swearing at one time by the Lord, and at another by Malcham; the nation that had turned its back upon the true God, and gloried in adopting the apparel of the heathen. Just such is Christendom at this day; we might almost say, even such is Britain also!—Britain, that used to be the Gentile Judah.

But the Lord never forgets His true people who are in the midst of surrounding wickedness, His Noahs, who walk with God in spite of a nation's perjury. To them He has a message, not a startling one, nor yet, at first sight, what we might have expected; it is so calm, and almost commonplace. It is a message, however, which, when weighed and applied, shall be found worthy of the Lord, worthy of Him who knows how to keep our hearts at rest, as well as how to keep us from falling, and who accomplishes His end by the simplest means. It is a message, which we, in our day, may find as suitable to ourselves as it was to them, even if our day presents features of more awful significance, a darker horizon, and more portentous clouds above. In such times, it is the Master's wish and will that no disciple should be shaken out of his daily course of calm obedience and steadfast faith in the Son of God. "*See that ye be not troubled*" (Matt. 24:6), is the word from Jesus on the Mount of Olives, when foretelling wars and rumors of wars, nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; famines, earthquakes, pestilences, persecutions, and backslidings; days of vengeance; great tribulation, such as had not been seen from the beginning of the world. "*See that ye be not troubled!*" Faith is calm, for it sees Him who sitteth on the floods calm. Faith must not be flurried, must not run to and fro, must not make haste. Hear, then, the Lord's counsel to us by the lips of His servant Zephaniah (chap. 2:3), "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought His judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger."

I. WHAT THEY ARE CALLED TO.—At such a time enormous preparations are made on every side by the nations at war. Our preparation

Digitized by Google

is a simple one: "*Seek ye the Lord!*" That is, repair to Him, resort to Him, or seek Him out and use Him, as men seek the shady forest of palm-trees, or seek the coolness of the great rock, in the heat of the day. The alarming aspect of the times ought to shake God's people out of their ease; rouse them to seek Him anew; that is, with new interest and confidence, to have recourse to that Lord whom they know so well. The men of the world seek out their unused weapons, examine their stores, and put their armaments to new uses. But the Lord's people hasten to Himself, renew their confidence in Him, speaking to Him by prayer, meditation, fellowship, and every such way. In days of alarm, be not excited, nor betake yourselves to novelties; run not after those that cry, "Lo, here!" or "Lo, there!" turn aside, and "*seek ye the Lord!*" No one who complies with that call will fail to search the Scriptures, meditating day and night, and learning God's thoughts and heart. But, besides, says the divine call, amid all your seeking, pay particular attention to two points, the cultivation of righteousness and meekness. Yes, have special regard to the things His heart cares for, commonplace though they seem to be. "*Seek righteousness.*" Seek it out. What if you have lazily, in a time of quiet, let this pursuit be neglected? "*Seek righteousness;*" that is, conformity to the requirements of the divine law and character, the fulfilment of all that He, as the Sovereign Lawgiver, demands. At a time when men shall be bent on self-gratification, self-aggrandizement, and especially at a time when *the Lawless One* shall be giving countenance to every form of lawlessness, see that ye pay special attention to the *Lord's righteousness.* And this in a twofold way. 1. Prize the righteousness set forth and given freely to men in Him who was foretold to be the Saviour who should "magnify the law and make it honorable." (Isa. 42:21.) This is the imputed righteousness of the Substitute, known to, and delighted in, by the saints of both Old and New Testament times. Then 2. Cultivate the righteousness which shall be exhibited in his own person and life by the sinner who has, first of all, got the imputed righteousness. Under the canopy of imputed righteousness, the happy soul walks freely in the paths of holiness; and thus God's law, God's holy law, God's holy name, is honored before all the world. In a time of trouble, "*seek righteousness;*" make sure, anew and afresh, that all stands right between God and your conscience. In a time of lawlessness, "seek righteousness;" show the world, in that twofold way, your delight in the true character of God. And "*seek meekness,*" at such a time, with peculiar care. What is this "*meekness?*" It is that state of mind in which the believing man acquiesces fully in the Lord's providential ways and dealings, as well as in His arrangement about salvation-blessings. At such a time, many a disaster will occur, many a thrilling and appalling event. Many scenes may meet our view fitted to provoke and irritate; men dealing in violence and deceit with their fellow-men. But "*seek meekness.*" In all these circumstances, be able to say, "It is the Lord;" or, rather, hear Him saying from His holy temple, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." (Ps. 46:10.) And this will produce in your souls a great calm, a calm most helpful to faith and holy living in fellowship with God. This is real "*meekness;*" a bowing to God's purpose, entire submission to His ways, as when Jesus (Matt. 11:26-29) says, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth! Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight"—over the prospective ruin of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum,—and then adds, "Learn of me; for I am *meek* and lowly."

Thus far, then, the prophet points out to us the state of mind and action in regard to God which his own are summoned to in days of special evil.

II. WHO ARE CALLED TO THIS.—"*All ye meek of the earth, who have wrought His judgment.*" It is a little strange that the persons who bear this character should be singled out by these characteristics, when the Lord is calling for men to "seek meekness and righteousness." Have they not already done so?

Digitized by Google

Why not rather summon the proud and ungodly to turn now and pursue this holy course? But the Lord is speaking to His own, and knows well His own meaning.

It is to this effect. Ye who are already meek, cultivate that grace, and call it into special exercise now. Ye who already attend to the Lord's will, "who have wrought His judgment," or appointment (*i. e.*, have done as He appoints, in regard to your personal justification, and in regard to your personal sanctification), go on in your course—"ye meek, seek meekness; ye doers of what is right, seek righteousness still." It is like Psalm 27 : 14 and Psalm 31 : 24: "Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart." Ye that are strong shall be made strong; for it is His rule that, "to him that hath, to him shall be given." Ye who have attended to righteousness in the past, just go on so doing; only more than ever now in these times of lawlessness. Ye who have in the past shown your acquiescence in the divine will, exhibit that grace more than ever now in these trying times. Stand still, and see the salvation of God. You found *justification* when you "submitted to the righteousness of God," "receiving with meekness the engrafted word" (James 1 : 21), the proclamation of pardon and peace by the blood of the sacrifice. You found *sanctification* no less, in "receiving with meekness the engrafted word," for He has ever sanctified souls through His Spirit applying His truth. This, then, is all He asks of you in present circumstances. Continue, then, to honor Him. He lays on you no other burden, though we, in our ignorance and foolish imaginations, might suppose that for days of such evil and trouble, some new, some extraordinary equipment of the spiritual man must be necessary. No, says the Lord: Live the life of faith, day by day, as usual; stand by the Red Sea shore, and see how He will divide the waters. Abide in your ark. "Come, my people, enter thou into thy *chambers*, and shut thy doors about thee" (Is. 26 : 20); go not to any novelty; enter thy well-known chambers and abide there, like the Israelites, continuing till break of day within the blood-protected door.

III. WHEN IS THE TIME TO GIVE ATTENTION TO HIS CALL.—Here we go back to verse 2; for, in truth, that verse looks to both sides like an isthmus, that may be claimed by the sea on either side. We saw the nation that is ironically bidden "gather itself together," seem to be bidden so do at once, because of what verse 2 intimates. But not less does verse 2 bear with force on the summons of verse 3, to the "meek of the earth." It is *q.d.*, "Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you, seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth!" Give diligent heed to His summons before the things that are coming on, the things that are threatening you on every side, do actually reach their crisis. Get into your right position ere the worst come. See that you are in your well-known chambers when the judgment is poured out; take care lest any of you be found outside. The time is at hand.

"*Before the decree bring forth*" (verse 2), that is, ere ever the decree of God has come to its issue, and has brought forth its birth. All things are in His hand; His *decree* rules events. The use of that word conveys unspeakable consolation to the Lord's people.

"Not a single dart can hit,
Till the love of God sees fit."

"*The decree*," in Psalm 2 : 7, is God's determined plan, or purpose, to set Christ king on Zion; and *the decree* here is God's determined purpose in regard to these nations, more fully declared in chap. 3 : 8: "My determination is to pour upon them mine indignation." What a suggestion to His people of the certainty that all the tremendous armaments of the mightiest nations, all their movements, all their policy, stratagems, designs; all their rage and violence and self-will—are performing the counsel of the Lord, who has risen up to usher in the day of His anger.

"*Before the day pass as the chaff.*" Chaff flying before the wind is an emblem of helpless rapidity, all the more appropriately used here, inasmuch as the ungodly are as "chaff, which the wind driveth away." (Ps. 1 : 4.) The whole

Digitized by Google

clause "before the day pass," admits of being read as a parenthetical exclamation; for "*before*" need not govern the clause. In that case, the prophet will be understood as exclaiming, "Set about all this speedily, before the decree has brought forth its birth (*the day pass as chaff!*), before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you!" But what is meant by "*the day passing?*" Some (Delitzsch) think it is the day of wrath hurrying on; but the objection to this is, that, in the Hebrew, in this clause, there is no article attached to the word "day." It is simply "יוֹם," as if the prophet meant to use it as emblematically in opposition to "*night.*" "Lo! (says he) day passes away like chaff." That dark night will set in. Hasten before evening to complete your preparations.

Yes, "*before* the fierce anger of the Lord, the day of the Lord's anger come upon you," ere ever that awful hour has arrived, O ye meek of the earth, be found in your chambers. Be in the ark, shut into it by the Lord, ere ever the first drop of the deluge falls. Is it not a call that reminds us of our Lord's words in Luke 17 : 31, 32, "In that day, he which shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife;" or Matthew 24 : 15, 16, "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place, *then* let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." The preparation is simple; the readiness is nothing extraordinary; but see that it be made, see that no one of the Lord's people be found dallying with the world, or carried away, like the world, by alarm, and distraction, and care.

IV. WHY IS THIS CALL SENT?—"It may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." All for your sakes, ye meek and righteous ones! It is the likely way, it is the only way, to escape on that day. Our Lord's words will occur to mind at once, "Watch therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." (Luke 21 : 36.) It shall be a time of "*surfeiting and drunkenness,*" though a time of trouble and fear—a time, too, of "the *cares of this life*"—and the day shall come "as a snare on them that dwell on the face of the whole earth" The only way to escape all these things is following the prophet's counsel: "Seek the Lord, seek meekness, seek righteousness;" and, then, "it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger."

But does He not promise an assured hiding? Is it only a "peradventure?" Does not Isa. 26 : 20 promise more than these words seem to offer? In answer, let it be understood that the word rendered "*it may be,*" is a term that puts a matter before a person in its gentlest form. As in Isa. 37 : 4, "*It may be* the Lord will hear the words of Rabshakeh," though apparently hinting a doubt, the term really suggests more than likelihood; it is *q.d.*, It would be worth doing this, *were there only* a peradventure and a possibility. It is like Phil. 3 : 10, 11: "I have suffered the loss of all things . . . that I may know Him . . . *if by any means* I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead." There the apostle does not intend to convey any idea of doubt, but means to say, "All this is worth doing, and any means would be worth using, in order to attain that prize." At any rate, this we know, that whatever be intimated by the Hebrew term, other passages declare that the Lord's people shall be hid beyond doubt, so far as any real evil is concerned. O people of God, ye meek of the earth, if, in the midst of the din and tumult, the bloodshed, the carnage, the murderous slaughter, amid the groans and miseries and cries of suffering nations, ye keep your place at the side of Christ at the cross, your hand taking hold of the altar's horns, your eye on the accepted sacrifice, then it shall go well with you. "*See that ye be not troubled.*" (Matt. 24 : 6.) Keep from alarm and excitement, and keep far from the delusive schemes which political wisdom will propound as the panacea for earth's troubles. "*Seek ye the Lord,*" and it shall be well with you on that day.

That solemn passage in Rev. 16 : 15, "Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame,"

Digitized by Google

at the very hour when Christ exclaims, "*Behold I come as a thief*," plainly insinuates that some of the Lord's people, or some whom every one regarded as such, may be found in a most unprepared state on that day. Sucked into the whirlpool of politics, fairly borne off his feet by public events, which he fancies may be producing renovation instead of ruin, the man of God may be overtaken by the days of the Lord's anger, and by the appearing of the Son of Man, when his soul is not enjoying communion with the Lord; when he is conforming very far to the world, like Lot; when he is not actually exercising "meekness," but is fretted, excited, agitated by passing events. Such a one shall be saved no doubt, but "so as by fire" (1 Cor. 3:15), losing the reward he might have won had he been found trading with the talent of "meekness" and "righteousness" when his Lord came.

Oh, unsaved soul! come you also and "seek the Lord, seek righteousness, seek meekness." For just as the message of a risen Saviour in Matt. 27:7–10, though first sent to disciples, was also for men at large; so it is with this call. It summons *you* also, unsaved soul, young or old, who may read these lines. Come to the Righteous One, come to Him who is meek and lowly; get righteousness from Him at once, and, clothed in that righteousness, sit at His feet, and learn to be holy and to be meek. Surely you know that every sin of yours is a mark for the arrow of a coming Judge; your guilt, fuel for the fire of His fierce wrath. "Indignation" is a terrible word; "day of indignation," a terrible day. What if it overtake you? Like chaff before the wind, day is passing away, and darkness coming on. "Seek ye the Lord. It may be *you* shall be hid."

Editorial.

NAPOLEON.

The year 1870 was a portentous one. The Roman Church declared its Head infallible in matters of faith, and set up the Pope for a God in holy things. The "placets" (yeas) were voted by the assembled Romish dignitaries amid fearful peals of thunder, and vivid flashes of lightning. One day before this final vote of the Council—not on the day after, as many prints have stated—the sudden war between France and Prussia (long expected by close observers, yet begun as by an electric shock), broke out. Every one was aware of the complete preparations of Prussia, as to men, arms, and supplies. But no one, except, perhaps, to some extent, the French Emperor himself, was prepared for the weakness displayed by the French armies. Their disastrous initial overthrow arose mainly from their inability to concentrate their men, and their supplies of munitions and provisions, as rapidly as the Germans could. And the chief cause of this, according to Napoleon's pamphlet, was that the men in a regiment belonged to various parts of the country; whereas, in Prussia and her allied states, each province had its own organization, complete in itself, and ready to move at short notice, and to be concentrated into vast armies. The French were likewise inferior in absolute numbers. In battles, they were usually overmatched two to one; and sometimes more, as at Wörth, owing to their inability to concentrate in time, and their inattention to those minute details which, in these days of railroads and telegraphs, so often prove decisive matters.

Rome was denuded of French troops; and the clamors of the Italian people compelled Victor Immanuel to take possession of it. Consequently, the remaining temporal power of the Pope was dissolved, as if by magic.

A French army of 80,000 fighting men, and 50,000 invalids, surrendered at Sedan, and Napoleon himself with them. And not very long after, the rest of the main body of the regular French troops, shut up in Metz under Bazaine, laid down their arms. The world was amazed

Digitized by Google

to hear their number;—no less than 150,000 men, of whom more than half were disabled.

Thus, Napoleon's power melted away within a few weeks, and he lost his throne! No one anticipated such an astounding overthrow. Such unparalleled disasters to a well-trained army are entirely unprecedented in European history.

But while we write (December 12th), the world is again surprised by the unexpected further resistance of the French. Napoleon's words to his troops have been, from a modern standpoint, already justified: "The conflict will be long and tough."

As our readers have, no doubt, pondered these things, and may perhaps desire to hear what are our views, it may be proper for us to make some remarks respecting occurrences so extraordinary.

We hope that it is by this time well understood, that from the beginning of our serial we have made no attempts to dogmatize; yet it is both natural and proper to consider the *signs of* the times as bearing on our great hope, even the manifestation of the glory of the Great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ. There are many future events sharply defined by the unerring word of prophecy, and certain necessary consequences flowing out of or connected with these. About such things there can be no mistake. If we refuse to acknowledge them, or look for *them*, we take our stand among the scoffers of the last days, who say: "Where is the promise of His coming?" So long, however, as these grand predicted outlines have not taken shape before our eyes, it becomes us to speak with a proper moderation when discussing the probable prophetic bearing of passing events. In the conjectures we venture, or the opinions we entertain regarding these, it may happen that we are in error; but this will in no way affect our grand theme, nor the positions we have heretofore taken. Because we cannot know with absolute certainty our precise chronological position, shall we therefore fold our arms and cease to notice and discuss what is transpiring around us? Such a course would be quite as foolish as to run into fanatical extremes; and quite as guilty. If we may not say: "Lo, here is Christ," or "Lo there," neither may we say, "My Lord delayeth His coming." The true procedure is, to closely watch passing events, and to exhort one another daily; and so much the more as we see the day of the Lord approaching. This we have been doing. We have endeavored to give meat in due season. We have therefore nothing to retract, nor the slightest reason to be discouraged at any supposed non-fulfilment of confident expectations.

The coming of the Lord is near. Yea more, we insist that it is imminent. And amid a dense cloud of unbelief respecting it, we have raised, and shall, if God permit, continue to raise our feeble voices, to do what we can to help to prepare a people for the Lord.

There are certain points in sacred chronology which are absolutely fixed, by the sacred word itself, and there are others respecting which we cannot speak positively. The wisdom of God has ordered it thus. We do not believe that it is at present in the power of the keenest research to fix with absolute certainty the end of six thousand years since the creation; but on the other hand it is not the part of good sense to disregard the proof that we have reached the approximate termination. Therefore, the exhortation to the Church to watch for her Lord was never more urgent than at the present time; and this is the great truth which has called into being, and up to this time sustained, our little periodical.

As is elsewhere pointed out, that the Lord, when He visibly appears, brings all his saints with Him. Therefore, the Church is taken to Him before that time; and, as we have proved from Scripture, not all are removed at once, but in proportion to the degree of their faith and preparedness. And when we see passing before our eyes occurrences pointing in the direction of the consummation pictured by the word of prophecy, we should be recreant to our high trust did we not insist that at any moment that great event may transpire which shall be the occasion of the going forth of the Church to the Bridegroom.

The disasters that have recently befallen Napoleon have, as was to be expected, given rise to a torrent of open sarcasm, or ill-con-

Digitized by Google

cealed complacent sneers, at students of prophecy. But what is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord? If we are moved by them, we are not yet grounded in the study of the prophetic word.

For what is it that we see, when we calmly contemplate the matter? A number of earnest students of prophecy have, for a number of years past, expressed their conviction that Louis Napoleon would ultimately be developed into the predicted Antichrist. There is nothing intrinsically absurd in this view. Or if there is, where is the absurdity? The Antichrist is to be a man, just like any other, and he is to be developed out of just such materials, however wonderfully the supernatural and infernal may, and will, come into play in connection with his person. When the flood came, the course of things was proceeding as usual. And our Lord tells us that so it will be again.

These opinions respecting the French Emperor are also based on strong prophetic probabilities, which we have from time to time placed before our readers. Many years ago, Faber, on prophetic grounds, conjectured the restoration of the Empire, while the Bonapartist dynasty had apparently sunk into hopeless oblivion. And the writer of this article remembers that, as far back as 1850, a brother in the ministry suggested to him the probability of a wonderful career in store for Louis Napoleon, and pointed him out as the lawless one. Subsequently he, as Emperor, reached the pinnacle of greatness, power, and fame. That he is an utterly unprincipled man, and lives only for himself, no one has attempted to deny. But a *fool* he is not. His descents at Strasbourg and Boulogne with the eagle are no longer counted the crazy acts of a madman. He has displayed, throughout his career, the most consummate ability, as the nations have abundantly admitted. But now he is a prisoner. The political prints, with consistent want of penetration—for they are generally mistaken—join in the hue and cry against the fallen Emperor, who has, all at once, it seems, lost his wits. The beasts kick the dead lion with impunity; and now none so poor as to do him reverence.

But what if our political wiseacres should be again mistaken? What if there should be another, and still more astounding, revulsion? What if the overthrow of France should prove but temporary, and a necessary preparation for her part in the concluding drama of our age? What if, as in the last decade of the former century, the giant should be only rejuvenated by his prostration to his mother earth? What if Napoleon should be reseated on the throne more firmly than ever? What if, ere long, France, with a mighty rebound, should overflow her borders, and absorb the whole left bank of the Rhine? The deposition of Napoleon is part of the shame that has covered the French arms. And to regain and restore completely their military prestige and glory, may not the French people insist on conquering under the same imperial head that bit the dust?

These things may be, or others as strange. It is now quite certain that the declaration of war was as much the act of the nation as of the Emperor. It had just before, by an overwhelming vote, declared its confidence in Napoleon. The mass of the people are with him still, and the priests are all on his side. Napoleon and the Pope fell together; and they may again rise together. And as for the Papacy, its restoration to more than its former power, under, or just before the coming ten-king confederation, is pretty certain from the Divine Word (Rev. 17), though we may be unable, as yet, to say precisely what shape things will take.

Therefore, even as regards this specific expectation respecting Napoleon, it may be prudent not to be too confident that its fallacy is demonstrated. It is well not to shout until we are out of the wood. Even now, already, the possibility, or probability, of Napoleon's restoration is beginning to be discussed in those same newspapers, which, whether right or wrong, do but reflect the fleeting notions of the day.

The King of Prussia, from the nature of the case, is, doubtlessly, ready to replace the fallen monarch. A republic in France—what that bodes for other nations, Europe well knows. But Napoleon can hardly venture to receive back his crown from such hands. He ruled by the consent of the people: the doctrine of the nationalities was one of his main positions.

Digitized by Google

Therefore, it is more likely that from the people he will receive back the power, and thus the iron and the clay be again mingled.

Much has been merrily and triumphantly said about the Emperor's speech to certain Americans or Englishmen, viz.: "Gentlemen, when you return home, will you be so good as to inform your countrymen that I am *not* the Antichrist." Well, it may be so, indeed. But his assertion does not prove it: no more than Hazael's exclamation of old, when he heard the prophet say what he would become: "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" It only shows that he was not that character at the time, and did not expect to become so.

Some persons have not even had the patience to hear of the possibility of such a denouement. It has often happened that for want of apprehending the real bearings of a thing, many of the worst informed have been the most confident about it. Some seem to think a moderate degree of effort on their part would square the circle. And those who only superficially skim the prophetic word have no hesitation to challenge the ideas of those who have made it the earnest study of a lifetime.

In considering the possibilities of this subject, there are two things which are generally overlooked. The first is, that no one has asserted that Napoleon is the Antichrist *now*, but only that he may, probably, be thus developed. The revelation of the Antichrist is not until the removal of the Church; and, even then, not immediately; for it is only during the final three and a half years preceding the epiphany of the Lord that he reaches the pinnacle of his power and greatness. That he will be the greatest of monarchs is positively stated. If the time is near, why may he not be already on the stage; and why may not his antecedents be preparing him, perhaps unconsciously to himself, for the role he is to play? And in the second place, the objectors seem not to know, or to have forgotten, that in the time of Antichrist the *miraculous* element comes into play, both on the part of God and Satan, in a manner unprecedented in the previous history of our race. It is natural that it should. That will be the winding up of the present act of the great drama. At that time Satan will have been cast out from his present abode in space, and be confined to the earth: and he will have great wrath; because, understanding prophecy better than some of our superficial censors, he will know that he hath but a short time. He will give to Antichrist his power, and seat, and great authority. Have the objectors—the sensible part of them—forgotten that God will judicially send on men strong delusion, that they shall believe a lie? That the Lord has foretold that false Christs, and false prophets shall arise, doing great signs and wonders, so that they shall deceive, if it were possible, the very elect? Of the lamb-like beast, at that time, it is written: "He doeth great miracles." The coming of the Lawless One is to be with *all power*, and *signs*, and *lying wonders*, and with *all deceivableness* of unrighteousness in them that perish. Who does not tremble at such a prospect? At that time, emphatically, all things shall *not* continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

Our readers will therefore perceive that it is not yet certain that the expectations of some respecting Napoleon may not yet be realized. We make no positive assertions now—no more than we have hitherto done—respecting matters that are not plainly revealed, or direct inferences from what is revealed. But there is, outside of that, a legitimate field of observation and inquiry. Napoleon may, possibly, have no connection with any of the characters that are yet to appear in the predicted drama of the future. But it is not at all certain yet that he will not. It is not a whit less likely than it was one year ago: on the contrary it is rather more probable.

P. S.—Who knows but the Lord may call his Eagle saints next month,—if, indeed, we have arrived at the year. I can hardly think this great consummation can be delayed more than two or three years longer, at any rate. But the most prayerful and keen observers will, from the nature of the case, be held in suspense; inasmuch as we yet walk by faith alone, keeping a steady eye on that light that shineth in a dark place. E. E. R.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. IX. FEBRUARY, 1871. No. 2.

Special Contributions.

WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

THE aphorism, "'Tis always darkest just before the dawn," is as frequently applied to the moral and spiritual night as to that of nature. When the darkness has apparently reached its height, we feel that it cannot be stationary, but confidently expect soon to see the glimmering light of dawn ere the sun arises in his first beauty and strength, and gradually irradiates the world with his meridian blaze of glory.

When atrocious wickedness and crime in the earth have reached a universal and unparalleled intensity; when the apostacy from the pure faith once delivered to the saints, and its ramifications in the varied and numberless forms of infidelity prevalent in all directions, shall have culminated in a blasphemous idolatry that shall throw all prior forms of it completely into the shade, because the product of an age of greater enlightenment and privileges; when the worldliness and Laodicean spirit that characterize so many Christians shall become so aggravated, that even the Saviour who died for them shall feel only a disposition to spew them out of His mouth unless they speedily repent; when sorrow almost beyond human endurance shall be in every household; when the love of many shall wax cold towards Him for whom they once professed their willingness to die, and towards their own near kinsmen too, from the indurating effects of extreme suffering unpitied and unrelieved, then these sure premonitions of coming light will cause all the watchmen on the outposts to herald the glad tidings that the first scintillations of glory's dawn are plainly visible.

But we are not of the night nor of the darkness; we are the children of the day; and as we are not in the somnolent condition of those who despise and jest about these solemn things, we shall not then first begin to put our hearts in order, nor wait until we see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place ere we flee from the contaminations of the world. We will not tarry in the plain lest we be consumed, but will thankfully and gladly avail ourselves of Zoar's refuge. There is sufficient of the spirit of that abomination in the holy place now to warn us of danger.

"The morning cometh and also the night." Though the morning was to come, the night must as surely follow. These words have not only a local and special signification, but they apply to the whole world and all its inhabitants. Those nations for whom they were originally intended have met their doom and passed into oblivion, but then the words still stand upon the inspired record. The predicted and expected morning dawned upon the Jewish world when the gladdening beams of the Sun of Righteousness arose upon Judea's favored hills, but how soon was the evanescent glory extinguished in the awful night of the crucifixion. And then the shades of night that had settled upon this doomed nation became more and more dense, and then commenced the unprecedented tribulation which may yet reach a darker degree of intensity ere their

Digitized by Google

anxious eyes shall see the glimmer of the final morning's dawn.

Yes, the glorious light of morning shone resplendently upon the world when the babe of Bethlehem was born, and the symphony of angels sounded sweetly through the skies, proclaiming "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men." But did not that golden sun soon set in night to the Jewish race? They crucified the Lord of glory, and then His blood rested upon them and upon their children. The dense darkness foretold by the prophet closed fearfully around them; they had filled the measure of their iniquity, and every horror predicted by Moses in case of apostacy, they have experienced to the fullest and most awful extent. Heaven's favorites for so many centuries, they were scattered to the four winds, and the places that once knew them are in the possession of one of the most ignoble of the Gentile races. How terrible, how unprecedented have their sufferings been; and who can regard them with cold indifference, or refuse them the sympathy which one branch of humanity should extend to another? "Be not highminded but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not us." Although the wild olive tree has been so kindly incorporated into the carefully cultivated and nurtured one, yet the dews, and rains, and sunshine of heaven's favor are altogether dependent upon the quality of fruit this transplanted tree shall produce. If the natural branches were not spared, we surely cannot be so presumptuous as to expect exemption from chastisement when our engrafted branches shall bear the same noxious fruit.

And in their wide dispersion, heaven's retributive justice has pursued them to the utmost corners of the earth. Escape it they could not, for the decree had gone forth; and those who called themselves Christians emulated their Pagan auxiliaries, and in their fanatical zeal prided themselves upon doing God's service. The descendants of him who had prevailed with God became a byword, a scoff, and objects of hatred and scorn; and the honored name bestowed in commemoration of the glorious mystical victory, became a term of contempt. Ah! surely mortals of every race and lineage should be not high-minded, but fear; for the recipients of heaven's most exalted privileges and gracious favors have long been prostrate in the dust. And as their minds have so long been blinded, and the veil undrawn from their incredulous hearts, how strange, too, that only the *adamantine* ingredients of the Gentile heart should be excited against their unfortunate kinsmen of the race of Shem. Surely the admonitions contained in their misfortunes might at least have produced discretion and forbearance from a selfish principle alone, if they could not elicit the pity of prosperous humanity; but one only wrought, and the other only suffered, the will of an avenging Providence.

"They lived in narrow streets and lanes obscure,
Ghetto and Judenstrass, in mirk and mire;
Taught in the school of patience to endure
The life of anguish and the death of fire.

"All their lives long, with the unleavened bread
And bitter herbs of exile and its fears,
The wasting famine of the heart they fed,
And slaked its thirst with marah of their tears.

"Anathema maranatha! was the cry
That rang from town to town, from street to street;
At every gate the accursed Mordecai
Was mocked, and jeered, and spurned by Christian feet.

"Pride and humiliation hand in hand
Walked with them through the world where'er they went;
Trampled and beaten were they as the sand,
And yet unshaken as the continent."

But, yet how merciful is that Providence even whilst exercising a just retribution. The morning cometh for them, and the deep gloom of night is fast evaporating in the glimmering light of early dawn. Soon shall the morning in all its brilliance and glory break for them, and that day's sun shall never more go down; when it reaches its stationary meridian, joy and gladness shall be perpetual, sorrow and sighing shall flee away forever.

And how with the Gentiles? "Darkness

Digitized by Google

covered the earth and gross darkness the people;" great as were many of their achievements, evincing much intellectual power even in this darkened state, they were yet enveloped by the darkest spiritual night. But their hour of emancipation was at hand, and they too participated in the glorious privileges of redemption. The middle wall of partition was broken down, and they were adopted into the commonwealth of Israel and the family of God. How inestimable was the boon of sin's expiation and a glorious immortality of which they were now the recipients. Truly the morning had dawned upon them. And the light rose higher and higher, seeming almost to have reached its zenith when Christianity became the established religion of the Roman Empire, but the Gentile sun was also to be eclipsed, and night to succeed this beautiful and brilliant day.

The natural characteristics of Jews and Gentiles are too similar not to produce a like result. The latter have not *literally* crucified the Lord of glory, but they have proven themselves no more faithful depositaries of His truth than the former. With this living warning of God's justice ever before their eyes, they, too, have yet hewn to themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water; they, too, have set up other gods at which their pliant hearts bow humbly down. From their brittle habitations it is most unsafe and unwise to cast stones at their unfortunate Jewish brethren. But how little have they heeded the solemn and affecting admonition, "Be not high-minded, but fear," from their great benefactor who belonged to that doomed race. He saw the shades of twilight already gathering around, as his prophetic eye beheld the "mystery of iniquity" about to be developed; and ere the gloom should culminate in darkest night wherein no man can work, he zealously enjoined it upon all to work while it was yet day.

Notwithstanding all these discouraging circumstances, Christianity has not been a failure, but its great mission has been accomplished. In every age how many there have been who have never bowed the knee to Baal—the Lord's obscure and hidden ones—through whose instrumentality millions have been saved from eternal death. They knew that they must work while it was yet day, that the number of the elect might be completed, ere the intervening night of gloom, previous to the full manifestation of Christianity's triumphs, would overshadow them.

Is there evidence that the night grows darker, and consequently the dawn approximates? We think this evidence abundant and unmistakable. Nor have we simply one species of testimony that the morning is about to break. Every significant indication detailed for our guidance and hope in the blessed word of God is becoming a veritable and palpable reality. So startling and impressive are these signals as to elicit attention and remark from those who have hitherto scoffed at them as tokens of approaching doom. Many surmises, conjectures, and expressions of wonder evinced their perplexity and their recognition of an unprecedented state of things in the world. There *is* perplexity, and consequently men's hearts are failing them for fear of what is coming on the earth. "What does it mean?" they ask, as calamities of every degree of intensity and every variety burst simultaneously or successively upon the world. "Surely we have never known it thus before; and we have scarcely time to recover from the effects of one catastrophe ere another descends in unmitigated fury upon our defenceless heads." They feel that the days are evil, and they acknowledge these sorrows as mysterious adumbrations of a more intense calamity which they fail to comprehend. They have such a realizing sense of a supernatural presence and power as their skepticism and absorption in worldliness has hitherto precluded; but we are often conscious of it only from the uneasiness which they are unable to repress; too open or positive a manifestation of it would subject them to the imputation of superstition, and they are quite too enlightened to accept such "old wives' fables" as are taught by those who accept the teachings of God's word in its literal sense, and reverently subordinate rational deductions and objections to it when they conflict with these.

Digitized by Google

Surely there is no indication of wars and rumors of wars subsiding in this dispensation. Are they not rather greatly on the increase? Are not nations rising against nations, and kingdom against kingdom continually? And are not Christian nations the leaders in these sanguinary struggles? And do they not slaughter thousands of their fellow-beings with precious souls upon the most frivolous pretexts? And there is no prospect of any diminution of this evil whilst the prevalent ideas of morality and honor continue to regulate the intercourse of nations. A temporary peace may again suceeed the present fearful storm, but may not the universal agitation be the precursor of the last Armageddon conflict?

And simultaneously with these wars and rumors of wars, how many other signals thicken around us. Are not earthquakes becoming so common as scarcely to excite attention or remark? Fearful and awful as some of these have been, how evanescent has been the impression created, eradicated almost instantaneously by more novel horrors. Indeed, so continually are we under the influence of these excitements, that a morbid distaste to a quiet and monotonous routine of duty is produced; and when there is a cessation of the startling, we are almost impatiently anticipating something sensational. And comparatively exempt as our own favored land so long had been from calamities and disasters, how have we been compelled to descend from this pinnacle of prosperity to the level of other nations in the fraternity of suffering.

Casualties and crimes of all kinds abound, until they no longer startle or surprise, or alas! excite even the natural or Christian sympathy they once did. How fearful that such should be the case, and yet it is so to a great extent. Familiarity with suffering has a most indurating effect. Impatience is excited by so many applications for aid, and some seem to think the frequency of these appeals a sufficient reason for withholding sympathy and charity. There is only the greater occasion for the exercise of benevolence under these circumstances, and how quickly the tornado, the freshet, the fire, or the earthquake can transport their devastations to other localities.

We hear almost constantly of commercial disasters, financial difficulties, of famines and pestilences; and widespread distress to humanity by the prevalence of various diseases among all kinds of cattle and fowls.

Crime increases greatly in magnitude and frequency; religion becomes more and more of a form, until infidels totally deny the truth and power of Christianity; weak Christians are discouraged and indifferent, and have cast in their lot with worldlings, whilst those who are in earnest in the pursuit of holiness are perplexed and astounded at this unaccountable state of things.

We cannot tell when the measure of this world's iniquity shall be full; when the night's darkness shall have reached its climax, thus affording a sure harbinger that the day is about to break; but when the trees begin to bud and blossom, we are worse than incredulous if we ignore so unmistakable an evidence of glad summer's near approach. This *beginning* of sorrows proclaims to all who are the children of the day to lift up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh.

"I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

"And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there was yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered.

"I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens, and your vineyards, and your fig trees, and your olive trees increased, the palmer worm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

"I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses: and I have made the stink of your camps to come up into your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

"I have overthrown some of you, as God

Digitized by Google

overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a fire-brand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

"Therefore, thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." Amos 5: 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12. M. E. S.

"DAVID THEIR KING."

It is an admitted principle of interpretation, that the language of the Bible should be received in its plain and obvious meaning,—in its literal or ordinary sense, unless the context or the nature of the subject shows that it is figurative. It is by the study of the Bible, with this rule of interpretation as a guide, that so many,—without knowledge of one another, and with little or no aid from human writings,—have been led to embrace the leading doctrines held by Pre-millenarians.

This principle does not appear to have been applied by writers on prophecy,—at any rate, not within the knowledge of the writer, to the following passages:

Ezek. 34:23, 24. "And I will set one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepherd. And I, Jehovah, will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them: I, Jehovah, have spoken it."

Ezek. 37:24, 25. "And David my servant shall be king over them. . . . . My servant David shall be their prince forever."

Hosea 3:5. "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jehovah their God, AND David their king."

Jer. 30:9. "They shall serve Jehovah, their God, AND David, their king, *whom I will raise up unto them.*"

All the interpretations of the above texts that I have met with, claim or assume that "David," here spoken of, is Christ. This seems to be a remnant of the prevalent figurative interpretation of the prophecies. If the righteous are to be raised from the dead at the coming of Christ, and are to reign with Him during the millennium, David himself must be raised among them, and reign as one of them. What, then, can be more appropriate, than that he should reign over his own people Israel?

The truth seems to be this: that the Lord Jesus Christ,—Jehovah—Jesus,—will reign over the whole world, the people of Israel included, Jerusalem being his capital; that David, under him, will reign over the nation of Israel; and that the twelve apostles, subordinate to both, will administer the government over the twelve tribes, as Jesus promised them.

Is not this the obvious meaning of the statements of the Scriptures of truth upon this subject? If so, is there any good reason why we should not accept it as truth? R. D. W.

"MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND."

Oh, God, Thy purpose is concealed
In time's mysterious womb;
No voice supernal has revealed
Aught that can pierce the gloom.
But man the curtain would withdraw
From dim futurity;
Would see what seers prophetic saw
In holy ecstacy.

And well it is the human eye
Sees not thy wise designs;
That in a darkness dense they lie
On which the sun ne'er shines.
How would our hearts sink with dismay,
If ills prospective rose,
O'erclouding visions of the day
Which dawns at night's dark close.

Our mortal hearts would sink with dread
At sight of sorrow's frown;
Nor even faith could see instead
The victor's glorious *crown.*
Hope e'er illumes the present gloom
With thoughts of coming light;
And e'en the shadows of the tomb
Transmutes to sunshine bright!

How little could we "occupy"
Till He, the Lord, shall come,
If black despair were ever nigh
Foretelling woeful doom.
What dire despondency and fear
Our hearts would paralyze,
Nor thought the gloom would e'er appear
The light of Paradise.

Digitized by Google

And if prosperity's bright sun
Shone e'er with cloudless ray;
And if until our race is run,
Bright pleasure round us play,
Secure in fortune's dazzling smile,
And joy's perpetual cheer,
The sunshine would us so beguile;
Thy *cross* would ne'er appear.

To revel ever in the sun,
And only pluck joy's flowers,
Unfits the toilsome race to run,
And enervates our powers.
And standing on the dizzy height
Of fortune and of fame,
'Tis hard to see the humbling sight
Of our Redeemer's shame.

Then let us feel that everything
Will only work for good;
And know whate'er the future bring
Will just be as it should.

Our destiny is in His hand,
And more we need not know;
On fortune's heights our feet may stand,
Or adverse gales may blow.

And though the cup that's overrun
May harder be to hold,
Yet e'en when shines the dazzling sun,
His strength will still uphold.
"All things are ours," the Scripture saith,
And naught can separate
Us from His love, not even death,
Nor Satan's fiendish hate.

If trouble come, we'll feel that God
Is ever on our side;
And though upon us rests His rod,
No ill can us betide.
He says that He will never leave,
That He will ne'er forsake;
And that His love to us will cleave
Till earth's foundations shake! M. E. S.

Selections.

THE GLORIOUS APPEARING.*

BY SAMUEL H. GIESY, D.D.

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."—TITUS 2 : 13.

THE relation of the second to the first advent of Christ, it is to be feared, is not generally apprehended or appreciated. The proof of this lies in the fact, that it has dropped out almost entirely from our ordinary pulpit instruction. Regarded as an event at a distant, or, at best, indefinite period in the future, it is no marvel that just that posture of mind, which our Lord himself gave as one of the signs of the last times, should have come to pass, and, as a necessary consequence, all earnest treatment of the subject have disappeared from that place of divine teaching, where the watchman especially should be on the *qui vive*, in wakeful and momentary expectancy. Said our Saviour, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?"—the very question indicating just such a disappearance from the mind, even of the church, and of the world generally, of faith in the grand event itself.

In this particular, there is a wide difference between the modern and apostolic way of looking at this solemn fact. With the apostles, there was a deep conviction of what may be called its imminence, its impending character. And hence the uniform way they maintained in writing about it.

With God there is no sense of time. The division of time into ages, centuries, years, seasons, belongs to finitude—finite creatures and things—man's necessary and convenient arrangement. But in this very connection, St. Peter tells us: "That one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," no past, no future, but "one eternal now."

And so intervening time disappears also with persons writing under the direct influence of inspiration; God's Spirit, as it were, overleaping and obliterating the necessary lapse of ages. We know how this actually was the case in the earlier prophetic utterances. Take the prophet

* A sermon preached in Christ Reformed Church, Philadelphia, on the second Sunday in Advent.

Digitized by Google

Isaiah, who, because of the definiteness with which he speaks of the Messiah's coming in the flesh, has been called the Evangelical prophet, and yet he lived seven centuries before the predicted event actually transpired. Thus, not in the remote future, but in the present tense, we hear him say: "Unto us, a child *is* born, unto us a Son *is* given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Under this prophet's deep conviction of the certainty and imminence of our Lord's first advent, all intermediate time is wiped out.

In like manner, under the force of inspiration, our Lord's second advent, though centuries were indeed to intervene, was yet viewed and written of as a near event. Nor were the apostles wrong in this. For an event, which may happen any year, any day, any hour, must be regarded, and ought to be treated as an immediate occurrence. Is it not so in regard to the matter of a man's own death? It is equally so in regard to the momentous event now under consideration. And, therefore, taking the apostles' representation in its literal sense—"the Lord is at hand"—we do only act the part of prudent men, when ordering our life continually under this impression, and, in the several spheres wherein God has placed us, are found always both vigilant and diligent. It is St. Peter who thus earnestly exhorts: "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that *ye look* for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless."

There is also another particular, wherein the modern differs widely from the uniform apostolic way of looking at our Lord's second advent. How generally, in the minds of Christians even, is it associated with feelings of dread. It is the one great event of terror in the future. Not so, however, in the minds of the apostles, and the early church. By them it was hailed, in the sorest trials, in threatened martyrdom, as the one great source of comfort, the one ground of surest consolation. And so in the text itself, you find it spoken of as the Christian's *hope*, aye, his *blessed* hope. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." But intending to revert to this thought again, in its proper place, we ask your attention, as first in order and importance,

To the *personalness* of the great event referred to in this passage, the reappearing of our blessed Lord.

To get rid of the personal return of Christ to earth, some have regarded this and kindred passages as teaching a provisional, others a providential, and others a spiritual manifestation. To refer it to the multiplied and constantly extending provisions of God's rich grace, the preaching of the Gospel, the wider circulation of the Bible, missionary conquests, and the spread of Christianity, is, any one ought to see, flying right in the face of this uniform representation, the *visibility* of Christ's presence in the ever-recurring mention made by the inspired writers of this coming. Says St. John, in his apocalyptic vision: "Behold *He* cometh with clouds; and every *eye shall see Him*, and they also which pierced Him."

Such other passages as these: "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your *Lord* doth come;" "Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the *Son of Man* cometh," are taken as indicating that providential visitation—death—in the uncertainty of its precise date and circumstances awaiting all men. In this alone, however, the two events have something in common. Both alike are *imminent*, an event which any moment may happen. But after all, it is only in the way of accommodation, that these and such like passages can be used to press home the constant need of personal readiness for the day of death. However needful such warnings and the preparation involved, it must be admitted that the application of them to a subject not primarily intended, though in some particulars even fitting it, is an extremely unfair and dangerous way of dealing with Scripture. The sacred word in this way becomes a nose of wax, just what this or that man chooses to make it. On examination, it will be found extremely doubtful whether *death* is ever referred to in Scripture as a *coming of Christ*. Even if that

Digitized by Google

were the case, the two events are calculated to excite widely different feelings in the Christian mind. No one has expressed this difference more strongly than Baxter. He says: "Death appeareth to me as an *enemy*, and my nature doth abhor and fear it, but the thoughts of the coming of the Lord are most sweet and precious. Christ's servants can submit to death, but His coming they *love and long for*." How much these words of the author of that immortal book, "The Saint's Rest," sound like the customary way the apostles had of speaking of our Lord's coming. In full view of the scaffold and the axe, we hear the noble Paul exclaiming: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me *at that day*, and not to me only, but unto all them also that *love His appearing*." And in another epistle he says: "For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we *look* for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned *like* unto His *glorious body*."

Nor does it come to the actual demands of the great truth involved in the case, to make the promised reappearance of Christ on earth to mean nothing more than a spiritual manifestation of His presence. It is not one and the same with Christ's coming to make His abiding presence in the church, in the fulfilment of these precious words: "Lo, I am with you always even," &c. Nor is it one with the Spirit's presence and power in the world, first signally displayed on the day of Pentecost. Nor is it one with the Spirit's efficaciousness in the sinner's call from darkness into gospel light and peace. It is not with the Spirit's mission, that this and kindred passages are concerned, but the coming again, in majesty and glory, of the *second person of the Godhead*, who formerly had, in lowliness and rejection, walked the earth. Clearly enough the passage before us refers, not to any provisional, or providential, or spiritual manifestation of Christ, but His actual return in *personal* form.

In this regard, the second is of a like character with the first advent—*personal*. All the prophecies of that gracious event for four thousand years, stretching onward from the Serpent-Bruiser of Eden to Isaiah's distincter "Prince of Peace," and Daniel's "Son of Man," and St. John Baptist's "Coming One," were, as you all can readily call to mind, of this *personal* character. Ah! the hopes and yearnings of the Jewish heart gathered, as every one must feel who will study the ancient Scriptures, around a person, and not a spiritual abstraction—a divine manifestation merely. That ancient people of God looked and longed for One, who stood out before their faith as the Messiah—the "Sent of God," "the Anointed of the Lord." Things, such as dreams are made of, would not have satisfied their longing, expectant heart: nothing short of *Him*, whom Haggai boldly names "The desire of all nations."

What, in those dealings of God with the ancient world, came forward in representation and full expectation under a truly and strictly personal form, at length, in the incarnation of Christ, became such actually in wondrous reality. What have we here? "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord." "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman." "The word," who St. John tells us, "was with God in the beginning, and was God, was made flesh, and dwelt among us." O, this was the mystery, hid for ages, made known now to a *waiting* world. This was He of whom prophets had written, and for whom expectant centuries had looked—Jesus, the Son of God, the Son of the blessed Virgin—the God-man; the Christ.

The second advent must be alike *personal* in its form; not a providential coming of Christ, nor a spiritual manifestation simply, but a *visible* reality. Nay, not this alone, but more, the return of the same identical being, put to death in the flesh, and taken up to glory. He must be the same who, in the "yesterday" of eternity, dwelt in the bosom of the Father; the same, who in this transitory "to-day" appeared in a suffering form—

> "Wrapp'd His Godhead in a veil
> Of our inferior clay;"

the same who now, in the great "forever," occupies a seat with co-equal power, on the throne of the Eternal.

Digitized by Google

Mark how the *identity* with the divinity of this coming One is here asserted. It is "the appearing of the *great God, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.*" Not a different person, but that divine, human Saviour who died for our sins on the cross, and rose again for our justification, and in His ascension-glory and power, bore in His own exalted form into the eternal dwelling-place of God the pledge of our perpetual dwelling there, in His coming again "to be admired by all them who believe."

We find this identity of person in the first and second advent entering clearly into Scripture. Thus on the mount of ascension, to the disciples and multitude in wonder and disconsolation following their Lord's retreating form, the angels declared: "This *same* Jesus who is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." And so the Lord Jesus himself, in His parting words, plainly and comfortingly said: "*I*," "I *will come again* and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." St. Paul also says: "To wait for His Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even Jesus*, who delivered us from the wrath to come."

This identity of person of the returning with the incarnate and crucified Redeemer, enters into all the early creeds. Thus the apostles' creed: "He ascended into heaven; from thence He shall come again." And so the Nicene creed: "And shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end." The same thing enters into sacred poetry, ancient and modern. In the grand "Te Deum" of the early centuries, the Church, age after age, has been singing:

"Thou art the King of glory, O Christ,
Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.
When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man,
Thou didst humble Thyself to be born of a Virgin.
When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death,
Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.
Thou sittest at the right hand of God, in the glory of the Father.
We believe that *Thou* shalt come to be our Judge."

Dr. Bonar, in his hymns of Hope and Faith, thus gives expression to this conviction and Christian yearning:

The Church has waited long
Her absent Lord to see;
And still in loneliness she waits,
A friendless stranger she.
Age after age has gone,
Sun after sun has set,
And still, in weeds of widowhood,
She weeps a mourner yet.
Come then, Lord Jesus, come!

Another Christian poet thus beautifully ends an Advent hymn:

With my lamp well trimmed and burning,
Swift to hear, and slow to roam,
Watching for *Thy* glad returning,
To restore me to my home,
Come, my Saviour,
O, my Saviour, quickly come!

This one other selection we take from a translation of a Mediæval Latin hymn:

Our Hope and Expectation,
O Jesus, now appear:
Arise, Thou Sun so longed for,
O'er this benighted sphere!
With heart and hands uplifted,
We plead, O Lord, to see
The day of earth's redemption,
That brings us unto Thee.

"The day of earth's redemption!" Following out the very thought of this early Latin poet, we go a step farther, and say, that the personal and visible return of Christ to earth is a necessary part of redemption. It is no adjunct to that—something appended, in the way of majesty and grandeur; something wholly incidental. On the other hand, it is only rightly regarded, when it is felt and owned to be an essential and organic part thereof—the necessary end and conclusion of that whole grand movement of God's grace; that *glorious* consummation towards which it looked from its lowly beginning in the manger at Bethlehem. People, even Christian people strangely forget this—forget that the body, this tabernacle of clay, is to share at length, equally with our spiritual being, in the full glories of redemption. Christ came into our

Digitized by Google

lost world, not to save the one-half of our nature, although the infinitely superior part. He came to save man in the wholeness of His being. The body forms an integral and essential part of that wholeness. And hence we hear St. Paul announcing, as included in our Lord's work, "The redemption of the body:" and very properly represents the whole creation, not only waiting for, but groaning and travailing in pain until that birth into fullest glory—an event which will only transpire, when, at our Lord's "glorious appearing," the vile bodies of the saints shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

Again, the second advent is necessary to the universal spread and complete triumph of Christianity. We have no faith in a pre-advent millennium. The millennium kingdom hinges upon and comes after that event. "The complete victory of truth," says Dr. Marsh, "I do not expect until the second advent of our blessed Lord. I have *no* hope of a general or universal spread of Christian knowledge till He comes."

How much there is in the lamentable condition of the world, at the present time, to forbid any hope of that kind! It strikes me, that the state of the world, society, and the Church, is deplorable indeed, in spite of all the Christian advantages of multiplied centuries. Look abroad! What are the ruling forces of the world? Wealth and scientific skepticism. Look at the universal tendency of wealth to combine and force its demands. The world speaks of corporations and rings. And the man who has yet to learn, that there is "the power back of the throne," has been all these days asleep. They thrust themselves into the very citadel of the government; control legislation; and have laws enacted to further their interests and schemes. And the fearful consequence is the breaking down of the *morale* of Christian nations, and the appalling increase of worldliness, sensuality, and impiety, giving both room and necessity for that scientific infidelity, which with a characteristic boast of *new facts* said to be damaging to the pretensions of Christianity, parades itself before the world, in its sweep carrying along many adherents and advocates.

Look at the social problem becoming more serious every day. The conflict everywhere between capital and labor means something. The seething of the masses, like boiling water in a cauldron, augurs no easy position, no cushioned seat to the enthroned, ruling in tyranny and lordly self-will.

Look at the state of the church, with its almost endless dissensions and countless divisions, each flaunting on its banner the name of its human leader. Some glorified reunions have taken place, but which, alas! in the infirmity of a common nature, have only, in the end, made way for a wider breach and another establishment. Opposing with zeal, and, perhaps, sincerity, a received opinion, the history of the church tells us, how, over and over again, one man's vehement course has produced dissension in the entire body, and dissension worked out its logical results in a mournful disruption. Painful in the extreme is the divided state of Christendom.

For this sad and growing confusion of the times, I see no remedy, at all probable and adequate, but the "glorious appearing of the great God, our Saviour Jesus Christ." I can conceive of no millennium, no universal reign of Christian unity and peace, without His personal and visible return to earth. And hence, with the forecasting exile of Patmos, and the Apostolic Church, and the ancient fathers, and the Christians of those earlier ages, the torn church of the present should, more and more earnestly, pray: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

We consider, necessarily very briefly, the Apostle's second thought:

The character of this visible, personal return. St. Paul tells us, it will be a "*glorious appearing.*"

This it will be seen to be in the way of mere contrast. How lowly his first advent! He was God, and yet a manger was His cradle, and the beasts of the stall the mute witnesses of the incarnate wonder! He was the Creator of all worlds, and yet there was no room for Him in Bethlehem's inn! He was a King, nay the King of kings, and yet He was without a palace, sceptre, and throne; He was the adored of angels. Gabriel and Michael

Digitized by Google

in unstained purity and in sustained integrity, bending in homage at His feet, and yet on earth—the fallen earth—He came to reclaim, He was not classed with persons in place and power, "but made himself of no reputation," classed Himself with the poor. He came to His own, but His own knew Him not, put Him away, crucified Him. One word speaks out the vastness of His condescension in that first coming. Of all His antecedent glory, the Father's brightness, the reflection of His image, and the object of angelic worship—St. Paul says, "He *emptied* Himself."

In that glory resumed will He reappear, but to it will be superadded the majesty of His glorified manhood. He comes not in the inconceivable form of absolute Deity. He comes as the Man-clothed God. He comes, that every eye may see Him; they that have pierced him; the same as the crucified one, and yet now not exactly the same. Then the majesty of His Godhead was enshrined and hidden; but now flashing out from beneath that veil of suffering manhood—the human still there, but transfigured, as on the mount, with the outstreaming of the Divine, "His face shining as the sun, and His raiment white as the light." In his apocalyptic vision, St. John gives us this description of the glorious appearance of the Son of Man entering upon His judgment work: "Clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the loins with a golden girdle. His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire, and His feet like unto fine brass, and His voice as the sound of many waters; and He had in His right hand seven stars; and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shining in His strength." Ah! how unlike the Babe in the manger! How unlike the suffering Man of Calvary! And yet, 'tis He; no longer "wrapped in the veil of our inferior clay," but with the glorious robes of His coronation, the sceptred God, putting all enemies under His feet.

We might dwell further on this point, but we hurry on to this third and closing thought: The way the apostle regarded and here speaks of our Lord's second advent. With Him it is a *hope*, nay far more, "that *blessed* hope."

A matter, therefore, of joyful expectation, not, as too generally now, of terror and dread. Hope lends wings to energy. You know how this is in everything secular. It is the very soul of success. When hope dies out in a man's breast, his enterprise is gone; he might as well close up his place of business. It is the pulsative force lying back of human activity in whatever department of life put forward. What must be, at least what ought to be, the energizing force of this Christian hope? Throughout the sacred word, it is steadily appealed to and employed as a powerful stimulus to increasing vigilance and diligence. Possessed with this great thought, St. Peter writes: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be *diligent* that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless." Why at present is there such a lack of diligence in Christian duty? Why are the hands of God's people hanging down, and their knees feeble? Why does the Master's service seem irksome, and Christian work, in Sunday-schools and other places open to earnest laborers, shunned? Whence that carelessness and indifference, resting like an incubus on the very household of faith, sapping its energies and giving multitudes over to worldliness and sensuality? Come they not from the faintness of this blessed hope? Up, Christian, to neglected duty! Say not in thy heart, as a slothful servant, "Because my Lord delayeth His coming," I will rest at ease in Zion! O, court not supineness, seeing there is so much to be done, and "the day of the Lord draweth nigh!"

Moreover, with the apostle it was not only a hope, but a "*blessed* hope." It was particu-

Digitized by Google

larly blessed in the comfort which it afforded in that season of marked adversity and trial. Those were days of frightful persecution. In the service of the divine Master, men took their lives in their hands. From this same apostle's enumeration of his trials, we learn something of what he endured, and how, too, that noble soul was fortified and braced by the thought of "the coming and kingdom of the Lord." And for this very purpose of fortitude and comfort under the loss of friends, he uses it in his epistle to the Thessalonians. What comfort there is in it in the way he puts it! The Lord will come and gather to Himself all his ransomed people, to be with Him forever. "Wherefore," he adds, "*comfort* one another with these words." Mourner, dry your tears. The child you miss so much, the dear one over whose grave you bend in agony, though buried out of sight, is not lost. At the coming and in the kingdom of our Lord our buried loved ones shall be restored to us. This is a blessed hope, therefore, because a comforting hope.

It is, too, a blessed hope, because a *purifying* hope. St. John says, "He that hath *this* hope in him, purifieth himself, even as He—the Lord—is pure." O, let this hope find a lodgment in a man's heart as a living principle, and, as a sunbeam darting into a chamber chases away its darkness, so will this hope, in its apostolic distinctness and power, make clean and pure the chambers of the Christian soul. O, if Christians were only living under the deep conviction and consciousness of this truth—that the Lord's coming is an imminent event—how closely would they guard the avenues of the soul, that nothing impure should enter, only afterwards to work itself out in sinful words and actions! Cherish that blessed hope, that thou mayest be a better man.

Editorial.

PAUL AND THE JUDGMENT.

"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not my own self. For I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord."—1 Cor. 4 : 3, 4.

It was a malady of the old Greek commonwealths, that there was a constant tendency to factions and bigoted clans. The same also appeared in the early Greek churches, particularly in the one planted by Paul in the city of Corinth. Quick at learning, these people speedily attained a wealth of spiritual gifts and scriptural knowledge, for which the apostle specially commends them. But their steadfastness and continuance in progress were not so satisfactory. They presently became too learned, especially in their own conceits, undertook to judge and decide in matters beyond their sphere, and hence fell into the common vice of their race, separating into antagonistic parties, and suffering their religious zeal to run into a factious enthusiasm for this or that particular man. There soon was a Paul faction, an Apollos faction, a Peter faction, and a Christ faction. These and other consequent irregularities called forth the apostle's displeasure, and drew from him certain letters, in which he chides them as fleshly and carnal, and needing to go back and learn over again the true spirit of the religion which they had been led to profess. He finds special fault with them for their manner of judging between the ministers of Christ and of exalting one over against the other, as heads of so many different schools. And it is in connection with this point that the words now before us occur.

The subject for our present consideration, then, is, THE WAY PAUL FELT WITH REGARD TO THE JUDGMENTS OF MEN.

1. *The opinions and conclusions of people in this world he esteemed of very trifling consequence.* His words are: "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment." The original, and other translations have "man's *day*" (ἀνθρωπίνης ἡμέρας) instead of "man's *judgment*." So also

Digitized by Google

in the margin. The expression is peculiar and stands in antithesis to "the day of the Lord," when there shall also be a rendering of judgment of a sort much more to be considered than that which men may pronounce. The time in which the apostle wrote, and the whole interval between that and the coming again of Christ to judge the world, is "*man's day.*" This present course of things is much under the control of the human will. Man's opinions and resolves now have the sway. All the governments, courts, judgments and decisions of this world are of man's wisdom and making. The laws of society and the standing of men in it, are but the aggregate of human opinion and human adjudication. This age (*αἰων*) is the period of the exercise and rule of human self-will, in which man is the chief actor and in which things are judged according to present interests and necessities with very little regard to God, or what shall be hereafter. And according to the wisdom and conclusions which now govern, there is scarcely anything that is rightly judged. "Man's day" is particularly unfair to the things of God and eternity. Its discernment does not seem to penetrate them at all or to have any capacity to decide upon them with justice. Judged by "man's day" the whole economy of God is reversed, the cross is a stumbling-block and foolishness, and those who live and act with reference to eternity are looked upon as weak, shunned as unphilosophic, and often denounced as enthusiasts, visionaries, and fanatics. And a miserable set of men the early Christians were, if the decisions of "man's day" concerning them had been without appeal or future rectification. But the light of "man's day" is a very poor light. Its judgments are superficial, formed only from outward appearances and utterly without force beyond this brief life. They can, when favorable, bring nothing but a poor ephemeral good, and when adverse, they can inflict but a short-lived and feeble disadvantage. This is the light in which Paul viewed them, and so considered it "a very small thing" that he should be judged by these Corinthians or "of man's day" in general. No praise or censure of men could materially affect him, or have a feather's weight to turn him from his plain duty as an apostle of Christ. And blessed is that minister who can in like manner rise above what the world may think of him and live and preach in the light of other judgments than those which earth may render.

2. *He did not rest even in his own judgment of himself.* His conscience was indeed clear. He had nothing with which to charge and condemn himself. What he had done he had done honestly and faithfully as far as he understood his own heart. He knew of no failure on his part in the full performance of his duty as a minister of Christ. He was free from all compunctions for official dereliction, unconscious of having at any time faltered or come short. And a most blessed state it is to have a conscience thus "void of offence toward God and toward man!" How few Christians or ministers are able honestly to make such a profession! Many would consider it a state of perfection, than which there could be nothing higher. But Paul did not consider even this conclusive in his favor. "Yet am I not hereby justified." It is possible for the best of men to be mistaken in their judgments of themselves, as well as of other things. People may have clean consciences and know of nothing in which they are derelict. In the best wisdom and self-searching which they can exercise, they may find nothing with which to condemn themselves. And yet in the eye or God, things may wear a very different aspect. Because we think we are all that we ought to be, we are not to conclude that matters are with us just as we think they are. Our own consciences are not the ultimate judges. It is possible to be very conscientious and still be eternally lost. Conscience is too weak and blind a thing to count its decisions an infallible basis upon which to estimate our real standing before God. With all his great gifts and superior enlightenment, Paul would not rest in what his conscience testified, nor consider himself irreproachable, because his conscience did not reproach him. He knew the deceitfulness of the human heart, and that there was a possibility of his being led to form too favorable an estimate of his state. He

Digitized by Google

knew that God might see defects where he suspected none. He would not therefore involve himself in the folly of trusting to his own judgment.

3. *He committed himself to the unerring judgment of God.* He was aware that God would judge him; that God's judgment alone is that by which he would have to stand or fall in the end; and that from God's judgment there is no appeal. To that therefore, he referred his whole case, knowing that God would judge righteously as well as mercifully, and that the decisions of the great day would do him full justice without mistake and without partiality or undue severity. It was thus his heart took refuge from the various criticisms and censures passed upon him and from the dangers of reliance upon his own self-estimation. Men could not know him as God knew him. Nor could he know himself as the Lord knew him. Human eyes could look only upon the outward appearance, but God was acquainted with all that was stirring in his heart, his inward longings, motives and strivings, his inarticulate sighs as well as his uttered prayers, and with what degree of earnestness, devotion, and self sacrifice he had given himself to know nothing but "Christ and Him crucified." He might be mistaken in his judgment of himself; but the Lord could not be deceived or mistaken. He would do right. He would judge fairly of all that was in him. And he would not wrong him by favors that he ought not to have, or by censures and disparagements which he did not deserve. Therefore, to God's judgment he appealed and to that he referred himself as the remedy for all the misjudgments of "man's day," and as a refuge from all this world's poor decisions. And happy is that man who can at all times and in all his trials rest in the thought: "*He that judgeth me is the Lord.*" Earthly censures have no sting to wound such a one. He is shielded as only a true Christian can be shielded, against disturbances from what men may think of him, and from the follies of an overweening self-confidence. It is a fearful thought, but for a good man, it is also full of comfort. From this subject, then, let us observe and reflect.

1. *There is a day of final judgment coming.* We are now in "man's day;" but it will not continue forever. It will soon have an end; and then will come "the Lord's day," the day when the drag-net of this dispensation shall come to shore—the day appointed in which God shall judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained—the day when those solemn words of Jesus shall be fulfilled: "Behold, I come quickly and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Nor need we be in doubt as to the coming of such a day. For almost six thousand years has the world been hearing of it from all the holy prophets and sacred books that have ever been upon earth. A day of judgment—a day of judgment—has been proclaimed ever since the time when Enoch preached on the other side of the flood. Symptoms of it have often shaken the world, and it already began to be realized by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. It is necessitated by all the conditions of nature and of grace. Without it, the world is a mere foundation without a superstructure, accountability which lies upon us from our earliest infancy, and follows us into all the relations of life, a mere superstitious conceit, and the church a miserable interference with the native impulses of our being. If it come not, then God has no government over men and all our spiritual fears, misgivings, and apprehensions are false prophets, and the great revelation of God is nothing but a gigantic lie. Existence itself has no object, no sense, no rational explanation and justice no reality, if there shall be no day of judgment. But there will be such a day. It is inlaid in all the structure of things. God has declared it by the mouth of all his holy prophets. Jesus has fore-announced it. Conscience refers all men to it. The eternal claims of inexorable right demand it. And however long delayed it must eventually come. You, and I, and all that shall have lived, will see it as certainly as we exist.

2. *It will be a very different day from "man's day."* Jesus is now invisible; and as He is out of sight, He is also largely out of mind. People have never seen Him and

Digitized by Google

hence the majority scarcely ever think of Him, and many seriously doubt whether He exists at all. But He will then *come* (ἐλθῃ)—advance from his present concealment—appear—make himself openly manifest; as it is written: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire" (2 Cor. 1:7, 8), "and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:30), "and every eye shall look upon him, and they also which pierced him." (Rev. 1:7.)

There is also now much passing in the world and in the hearts of mankind, which is never found out. Though the public history of the world is largely made up of recitals of sin and wrong, wars, feuds, tyrannies, rebellions, crimes, and changes, there is a much wider and fuller field upon which historians of this world have never looked—a field in which all history is enacted before it becomes history—a field crowded with facts over which the veil of secrecy is drawn, hiding the most real and most extensive part of human life from human view. O the animosities, the murderous deeds, the envies, the adulteries, the jealousies, the uncleanness, and the unhallowed thoughts and works of treachery, impurity and blood which never see the light here on earth! But when the Lord shall come, He will both "bring to light the hidden things of darkness and make manifest the counsels of the hearts." He himself hath said: "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known." (Matt. 10:26.) The veil shall then be stripped from every hypocrite, the cloak drop from every falsity, and every work shall be brought into judgment, "with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." Alas, what a different world this will seem, when God shall thus lift the cover from all human hearts and deeds, and show them as they appear to his pure eye!

Here also crime is continually escaping its just punishment, and virtue and fidelity deprived of its righteous reward. Wicked men prosper and flourish, and honest men are trodden down, despised, and made to suffer. Vice lifts up its head and carries itself proudly, defiant of all attempts to make it answer for its infamies, whilst virtue lies languishing in obscurity, and piety is sneered at, persecuted and hated, and the true children of God, like their Lord before them, receive no countenance from the proud ones around them. But the day of the Lord shall rectify all these inequalities. Then will each one reap according to what he has sowed. Wickedness then, as it will not be hidden, will not be any longer unpunished; and the worth and fruit of righteousness shall shine forth in the blessedness of the eternal kingdom, for which it has lived and suffered. The triumphing of the wicked will be at an end, and the peace and glory of the saints shall be forever.

3. *And to that day all our judgments and estimates of things are to be referred.* Most people live only in the light of "man's day." It is with reference to the successes, pleasures, and possessions of this world that they order their ways. They aim at nothing higher. Even the religion of many seemingly zealous Christians is a mere earthly thing. It builds costly temples; it observes days and hours; it glories in grand assemblies and services; it seeks after brilliant sensations, and delights in whatever attracts men, whether they are being led in the paths of righteousness and true holiness or not. It makes a great deal of the Bible, except really to believe and obey it; it is very forward in what it calls benevolence, and is very swift to run and serve in showy places where God has not sent it. It is very heroic and generous on great occasions, but with very little heart for the duties of piety and faith where it has nobody to look on and applaud. It takes upon itself the display and ceremonies of godliness; but after all, its spring is earthly, outward, worldly, and all its impulses find their chief food in the judgments of "man's day." The Lord's day it does not like to hear about. It can think of no greater calamity than the immediate coming of the day of judgment. It even feels itself piously called on to resent and ridicule it as fanaticism and a wicked disturbance of the proper peace of men, when we undertake publicly to intimate that Christ may come in our lifetime and that it is a Christian's

Digitized by Google

duty to be looking for Him now, any day, and every day. What better evidence need we desire that the judgments of such a religion are made up in the light of "man's day," rather than in the light of God's day? The results are manifest: a professing church, judging as the world judges, and walking as the world walks, disgusted with all questions of doctrine, opposed to fixed creeds, and never better pleased than when God's everlasting word is so explained away as to mean just what any one may prefer.

But this is not the spirit which the apostle inculcates. Christianity is a life fashioned to the eternal realities of the kingdom of God, and deriving everything it thinks and does from a lively anticipation of the nearing day of judgment, when the Lord shall come, bring to light the hidden things of darkness, make manifest the counsels of the heart, and give to each according to what he is. It esteems all this world's judgments and awards as "a very small thing;" and hence considers nothing rightly judged, except as it severs itself from the course of this world, and conforms to the eternal principels of truth and right which are to govern in the great day to come.

How is it then, my brother? Art thou living and judging in the light of "man's day," and with reference to this world only? Or is thine eye fixed upon the day of God and its tribunal, for the only proper decision of everything that concerneth thee? Hast thou really turned from this world's idols "to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven?" This is thy calling as a Christian. This is thy badge and mark as a child of God. This is thy only refuge against the disappointments, distractions, and disgrace which must befall all other classes of people. Hast thou then betaken thyself to it? Child of Adam, art thou living for eternity?

Merciful God, grant unto thy people grace to put away impure desires, and all false judgments, that so they may be made ready for Thy visitation through Jesus Christ, Thy dear Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

PREACHING CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

THOSE who are looking for the coming of the Lord, and expecting Him to set up on earth the kingdom of heaven—that kingdom for which He has taught us to pray, and say, "Thy kingdom *come;* Thy will be done *on earth*, as it is in heaven"—are very commonly *reproached* with being visionary, and neglecting the "practical" duties of Christianity.

We have often heard this insinuated; and the preaching of "Christ crucified" held up by way of foil and contrast. As much as to say: "At best, even if 'your views' are correct, you are forever holding up non-essentials; we preach essentials—the very marrow of the gospel—Christ crucified." In fact they preach only a *half* gospel. Howbeit, they mean not so, neither doth their heart think so.

A half gospel, we say. For why should the blood be shed and the inheritance be left? But the Word of God declares that *the whole creation* groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now, waiting for the adoption, which is the redemption of the body. And how *ashamed* will many be, at His appearing, that with the Record of His Will continually before them, they did not even understand what the Kingdom of our Lord and His Messiah is!

Not many years ago a company of ministers, assembled in fraternal conference, agreed that each one should state the substance of his public teachings. One of them arose and said: "I preach Christ and Him crucified." Whereupon nearly all the rest, one after the other, rose and repeated: "I preach Christ and Him crucified." Was it really as they said? It may well be doubted. They love Christ with all their hearts. But do they preach *Christ?*

Christ means *Messiah.* And Messiah means *The Anointed One,* THE KING. Do they recognize Him as King, except as swaying the inward affections of His people? Do they expect Him to set up an outward and real kingdom on earth? In the Epistles He is everywhere spoken of as Jesus Christ, or Christ Jesus. Sometimes one and sometimes the other. Jesus signifies *Saviour.* Christ signifies King. It is not an accident that the Scriptures speak of Him as Christ Jesus, and as Jesus Christ. Jesus King. King Jesus. And no one can be said to preach Christ fully who does not preach His coming and kingdom. E. E. R.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. IX. MARCH, 1871. No. 3.

Special Contributions.

BELIEVERS THAT NEVER DIE.

Remarks on the conversation between our Lord and Martha, as recorded in John 11 : 20–28, being an extract of a letter from a gentleman in Philadelphia to his friend in Illinois.

LIFE and immortality were brought to light by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The voice from heaven, speaking of Him, said, "This is my beloved Son, hear *Him*." It becomes us, therefore, to listen to what he has said (especially on these subjects), with the most profound reverence and attention. It is scarcely possible for us to conceive of the blackness of the darkness that obscured the heathen mind on the subject of the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting; and it is lamentable to think that even now,

"Amidst the blaze of gospel day,"

many of the so-called wise men and philosophers of the world, like the Saducees of old, profess to believe that "there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit."

It seems to me that the full meaning of the declarations of our Lord in His conversation with Martha, as related in this place, is not understood by the generality of readers. "Lord, if thou hadst been here," said she, "my brother had not died." (Mary said the same a little while afterwards), and some of the Jews that were present asked, "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" These Jews had, no doubt, seen Christ display his miraculous power by giving sight to the blind. It is evident, also, that the sisters had heard of his having miraculously restored to health and strength some that had been lying at the point of death; and they therefore felt assured that, had he been with them, he would not have permitted their brother, whom he so loved, to have died. Martha goes further, and expresses the belief that even then, though Lazarus had been dead four days, if he (Christ) would ask power of God to raise him from the grave, God would give it him.

She did not then know that Christ of his own power could raise her brother from the dead; for when our Lord says, "Thy brother shall rise again," she replies, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Then follows the glorious declarations of our Lord—of him who had life in himself, even as the Father had life in himself—and on whom all our hopes of immortality depend: "*I* am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, shall live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

It does not appear that Martha comprehended the meaning of these declarations; for she replied, "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world;" an answer quite irrelevant to the question.

It is clear to my mind that she did not then conceive him to be the Lord and giver of life; the incarnate God—the fountain of life and immortality. And we should not think it strange that *she* did not understand the saying,

Digitized by Google

seeing that his disciples, who were with Him continually, and to whom he so repeatedly announced, in the clearest possible language, that he should be crucified, and rise again on the third day, were unable to understand that saying: "It was hid from them that they perceived it not." Even *they* considered him as only "a prophet mighty in deed and word," whom they "trusted would have redeemed Israel" from the Roman yoke; and when he died, as he predicted, they were so bewildered and demoralized as to be "as sheep without a shepherd."

Having stated that these declarations of our Lord were *not*, as I think, fully understood by Martha, let me ask, how are they understood by us of the present day? That He is "the resurrection and the life," is the belief of Christians of all denominations; therefore it is unnecessary to dwell upon that part of his discourse. No one can believe in Christ without believing this. After having given Martha this assurance, he adds, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, shall live."*

Our Lord's meaning unquestionably is, that believers in him, though they may die a temporal death, shall be resurrected by Him at his second coming to a life of everlasting felicity.

In John 3 : 36, we read that "He that believeth on the Son of God *hath* everlasting life;" not *shall* have, but hath it now—in present possession, abiding in him (John 3:24), and which shall continue to abide in him, though he may die a temporal death; forasmuch as he has been made a partaker of the life which is in Christ, which life is, necessarily, immortal.

Our Lord ends his discourse with Martha by saying, "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."† It is this last declaration of our Lord which, I think, is not fully understood. The commentators that I have consulted seem to consider the two declarations as being about tantamount to each other, and both to mean the same thing: *i. e.*, that believers in Christ, whether they be living or dead, shall have eternal life; forgetting our Lord's words, that some shall "*never die*," meaning, most certainly, a *temporal* death. As I understand it, our Lord speaks of two distinct classes of believers: of one class that should die a temporal death, and of another that should "*never die*," either here or hereafter.

I know it is easier to raise difficulties than to overcome them; but I think there will be no difficulty in understanding our Lord's words in the sense I take them, when we turn to 1 Cor. 15 : 51, where the Apostle says, "Behold I show you a mystery; *we shall not all sleep*, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." See also 1 Thess. 4 : 15–18, viz.: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

When I consider these writings of the Apostle, and that by the word "*we*," he unquestionably means the saints which shall be "alive and remain" at the second coming of the Lord, I am compelled to believe that *they* are the persons of whom Christ says, "Whosoever *liveth* [is living] and believeth in me shall *never die*."

---

* 'Tis a pity our translators did not word this passage so as to express its meaning more clearly. We Protestants cannot accept the doctrine that men may believe in Christ *after* they have departed this life, and so obtain a blissful immortality; yet the words of our translation might be understood as teaching it.

† Some commentators write "shall never die *eternally*." But while this leads us away from what I believe to be the proper meaning, it does not help their meaning a whit; inasmuch as it is most certain that *no* believer in Christ, whether he be living or dead, shall die *eternally*.

Digitized by Google

The Apostle does not say, nor are we to understand, that all human beings that are alive upon the earth at the time of our Lord's coming, shall be changed without tasting of temporal death. He speaks only of believers in Christ; and, as I think, of the first resurrection. But admitting for a moment, for the sake of argument, that *all* persons that are then alive shall be changed without tasting of temporal death, it does not militate in the least against my understanding of our Lord's saying to Martha, that whosoever is living and believeth in Him should *never die;* for we know that the wicked shall be condemned to suffer the bitter pains of eternal death.

If I were asked to write an account of the conversation that passed at this time between our Lord and Martha, according to my understanding of it, I would do it thus: When Martha met Him, knowing that He had raised others to health and strength who were at the point of death, she expressed her belief that if He had been there He would not have suffered her brother to die. Our Lord, wishing to console her, and yet not desiring to tell her distinctly what He was about to do, assured her that her brother should rise again. She, in reply, expressed her belief that he would rise in the general resurrection at the last day. She did not know that, of himself, our Lord had the power to raise her brother from the grave while she was yet speaking; but she believed that if He would ask that power of God, God would give it Him. Our Lord then told her that *He* was the resurrection and the life; that as it was at *His* voice that those in their graves, at the time of the general resurrection, should come forth, it was only necessary for Him, at that moment, to say "Lazarus, come forth!" and her brother would be immediately alive again; and informed her that those that believed in Him while they lived in this world, though they might suffer temporal death, should be raised from their graves, and live with Him eternally; and, that those believers in Him who remained alive upon the earth at His second coming, should "*never die*," either here or hereafter, but should be changed, and, with the resurrected believers, be caught up to meet Him in the air, and be with Him forever in glory.

I offer these remarks with much diffidence. I cannot say whether they be new or not; but the explanation I have given to our Lord's words is more satisfactory to my mind than any I have met.

J. J.

CUMULATIVE FULFILMENTS OF PROPHECY.

The first article in the December number, 1870, of the *Prophetic Times*, though not quite so clear as I would have liked, was suggestive to my mind, and seemed to me to contain some useful hints. I therefore felt under obligations to the writer, as I always do to any one who gives a valuable suggestion in the searching of the Sacred Scriptures.

I have been a very careful student of the prophetic word for many years, and of the facts of history calculated to shed light upon it. And I have long been of opinion that there are frequently foreshadowing cumulative fulfilments of a prophecy, followed by the final, proper, and literal fulfilment. There seems to be an unsearchable fulness and completeness in everything connected with the divine purposes.

'Tis like Himself, the Eternal God—
Past knowledge—all divine.

I have no doubt that the so-called "year-day fulfilment" is real, though it may not be possible to define our precise position in it; for when we come to our own day there may be room for doubt, whether we are living under the sixth year-day vial, or are just about to enter upon it. There is a sense in which both may be true: that is, there may be a further unfolding of a specific fulfilment involved in the general one. The year-day fulfilment of the sixth vial is, with much probability, generally supposed to have begun more than forty years ago, and yet it is quite possible, and, indeed, likely that there is a still narrower fulfilment of both the fifth and the sixth vials, into which we have just entered; the former of which points to the present Franco-Prussian war, in the words: "his kingdom" (the beasts)

Digitized by Google

"was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain." We do not positively affirm it to be so; but if it were, the disappearance of the Ottoman Empire in the more specific fulfilment of the sixth, could not be far off, and then. . . . . That our Lord's "coming as a thief" takes place under the sixth vial, He says Himself. Under the sixth vial, the water of the Euphrates is to be dried up; that is, in the year-day fulfilment, as it would seem, the Ottoman Empire will cease to exist; expiring (peacefully, perhaps), either through an internal revolution of its heterogeneous population, or through a partitionment by the European powers. From the prophecies of Daniel it is abundantly manifest that at the time of the end, the four kingdoms that arose under Alexander's successors will have reappeared. As this sixth vial year-day fulfilment extends over a more or less considerable space, we who are now alive may be too close to it to form an estimate of its proportions as exact as we can in the case of the seals and trumpets referring to the earlier history of the Church.*

But whatever special view we may take of the fulfilment of the year-day sixth vial, it seems plain that the year-day fulfilments being nearly run out, we are on the very verge of the grand and proper literal fulfilment of the Revelation, ushered in by the door opened in heaven, or the translation of the saints of Rev. 4.

I think there can be little doubt that the Old Testament histories, while narratives of facts, are recorded, in many instances, as adumbrations and types of things in the eternal future, during which, when the Church shall sit in the heavenlies, in Christ Jesus, in the ages to come, God will show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus: according to the riches of His grace, wherein He hath abounded towards us, in all wisdom and prudence: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenlies might be known by *the Church*, the manifold wisdom of God; according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world, *unto our glory*.

Indeed, as regards our Lord, at least this fact appears to be alluded to in the otherwise seemingly extravagant language of John 21:25. May, therefore, the eyes of our understanding be enlightened, that we may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe; according to that working of His mighty power which He wrought in the

* It must never be lost sight of that while there is a year-day fulfilment, reliable, as far as it goes, but more or less dim, it *does not touch the proper burden of the grand prophecy of the Apocalypse*. The proper fulfilment is literal. The other is merely *adumbratory*. Disregard of this fact has led to great confusion. Thus Dr. Cumming, who is a very interesting and able writer, but not very reliable as a prophetic guide, has lately issued a book entitled, The Seventh Vial, in which he says that we have entered on the events of the concluding vial. Now the seventh vial (literal) is nothing less than the descent of the Lord and His holy ones at the battle of the great day, or, at least, ultimates in it; for it is then that the unprecedented natural convulsions, transcending even the great earthquake of the sixth seal, take place, as mentioned in Micah 1:4; Nahum 1:5, 6; Is. 41:15, 16; Is. 42:15; Is. 2:14; Is. 34:3, 10; Is. 64:1; Jer. 4:23, 24; Hab. 3:6, 10, &c.

The fact is, we have not even entered into the *year-day* seventh vial. The year-day seventh vial indicates unheard of disturbances among the nations; a *universal*, unprecedented, revolutionary outbreak throughout the globe, as by an earthquake shock. The year-day seventh vial ushers in the literal fulfilment of the Apocalypse, as it closes the (so-called) historical fulfilment. It seems to indicate the political division of Europe into three parts, perhaps Latin, Slavonic, and Teutonic. But *before* this general political revolutionary earthquake, the eagle saints are taken. For them the Lord comes, as a thief, under the preceding sixth (year-day) vial.

With what degree of rapidity these year-day events, in their *last* and *narrowest* fulfilment, succeed one another, who can tell? There may be an interval of a few years; and there may be almost no interval at all. In the latter case the conclusion is plain, if the premises are correct. Therefore let us *watch* and *pray*; because we know not when the time is.

Digitized by Google

Messiah, when He raised *Him* from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named—not only in this age, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body; the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. Stupendous climax!

> Imagination's utmost stretch
> In wonder dies away.

No mere human thought could conceive such things. On such statements alone, as these in Ephesians, I would rest my convictions that the Scriptures are divine. What a blessed Epistle this to the Ephesians is! God be praised for the clue to the divine mysteries, which it gives to the struggling saints, so much in need of comfort and light, whilst not yet delivered from the body of this death.

Our Lord declares that *all* things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Him.

I do not feel prepared to say that all which the above mentioned paper advanced is strictly accurate: indeed, the writer's statements were seemingly more suggestive than categorical. However, there appeared to me to be much in favor of the view that the ultimate Gentile domination will expire about A. D. 1913, as we now count time, and that the periods of the successive developments of the twelve hundred and sixty year-days extend over one hundred and twenty years. This is just the time of the respite granted by God in Genesis 6:3, which I had often pondered, seeking for a corresponding antitype. For our Lord has said: "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man."

Perhaps at the close of this period all open opposition to the rule of our Lord and His saints, in His new earthly kingdom, capitalized at Jerusalem, will cease. To many persons not familiar with the divine prophecies, the idea will, no doubt, seem shocking—even monstrous—that after the revelation of the Lord, and the battle of that great day, there will still be opposition to His sway; but the proof of it is very easy. Frequent allusions are made to it in the Prophets and Psalms, and the 38th and 39th of Ezekiel alone, are sufficient to show that such will be the case.

Allow me then to throw out another suggestion. David's warlike reign is, beyond doubt, a type of the manner in which the kingdom of the Messiah is extended over the world in the beginning, as the peaceful reign of Solomon is a type of its outcome. David's reign lasted forty years. During the first seven he reigned over his nearest kin, at Hebron. And during the remaining thirty-three over all Israel, at Jerusalem. Now if we deduct these forty years from the date given above, a proximate result is yielded that affords much food for reflection.

It is quite certain from Ezekiel, that the invasion of Gog (with Gomer and all his bands), takes place *after* the descent of our Lord, and His revelation to His brethren after the flesh, and their consequent bitter mourning, and conversion to Him in the manner of Paul, the Jewish first fruit; *the* one who was, as it were, born thus, in advance, out of due time (ἐκτιτρωσκω). For by fire, and by His sword, shall the Lord plead with all flesh.

We have an all-sufficient prophetic chart. Let us study it. For it is written: "The Lord God will do nothing but He revealeth His secret unto his servants, the prophets." Surely it is so. May the eyes of our understanding be more and more enlightened! However, we hardly need any additional unfolding or explication to convince others than beginners in prophetic study, or even beginners, that we are on the verge of the expiration of the 6000 years, and the ushering in of the day of the Lord. R.

Till He come, we take the cup,
As we at His table sup;
Eye and heart are lifted up!
We give Thee thanks, O Lord.
For that coming here foreshown,
For that day to man unknown,
For the glory and the throne,
We give Thee thanks, O Lord.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

"THOU HAST LEFT THY FIRST LOVE."

REV. 2 : 4.

THERE are words which lead you away from the speaker and absorb you in themselves. These are not such. There are others which carry you wholly past themselves to the speaker. Neither are these such. There are yet other words which divide you between themselves and the speaker, or rather which so engross your whole man with *both*, that you feel yourself passing continually from the one to the other, as if the eye could not be satisfied with seeing nor the ear with hearing. Such are these. You have both the picture and the artist, the poem and the poet, so interwoven that each recalls the other; nay, each is seen and heard in the other. No sooner do we hear these words of the Son of God—so searching, so alarming—than we are carried up to Him who uttered them, and our souls are absorbed in the mingled majesty and grace of the only-begotten of the Father; and while they send us down into the depths, to learn one of the most humbling lessons that was ever taught concerning the weakness, the fickleness, the faithlessness of a Christian man's heart, they carry us upward irresistibly, far above all heavens, to gaze upon the surpassing glory, and meditate on the matchless love, of Him who died for us and who rose again.

The words are those of complaint—some would call it fault-finding—and as such, might have repelled us from the Complainer; but, such is the nature and tone of the complaint, that we feel attracted, not repelled; humbled, but not hurt nor affronted; made to blush, and yet not chilled nor estranged, nay, rather drawn more closely to a friend so affectionate and faithful. The reproof is keen, yet it casts no shadow on the grace of the reprover. Rather does it magnify that grace into sevenfold brightness by embodying in the expostulation an utterance of the most generous, the most profound, yet, as we may call it, the most sorrowful affection that the world has ever seen. Next in tenderness to the tears shed over Jerusalem by the Son of God in the days of His flesh, is this outflow of disappointed love, over the estrangement of Ephesus, given vent to upon His throne above. It is not weeping. No; that cannot be now, when from His face all tears have been forever wiped away. But it is akin to this; it is the nearest thing to it that we can imagine; it is that which *would have been tears* anywhere else than in this heaven of heavens.

But the preface to the complaint claims special notice; for that complaint does not stand alone; it is a gem set in fine gold; and the verses which introduce it are as marvellous as itself. And what strikes us most in it is the minute enumeration of services performed by this Church, as if the speaker were most unwilling to come to the matter of complaint, to touch the painful point; being desirous of recounting all the good deeds and faithful services of the Church, ere He speaks the word of censure. "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil, and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars; and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted." What an introduction to the "nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love!" How fitted to disarm all risings of anger; to anticipate and smooth down the offence-taking that might have been stirred; to make Ephesus feel that He who was complaining was complaining in love; not exaggerating the evil, but much more disposed to dwell upon the good; that He was no austere man, no hard master, no censorious fault-finder, but loving, and generous, possessed to the uttermost of that "charity which suffereth long and is kind; which seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, and never faileth."

Digitized by Google

But it is not the mere recital of His servant's good deeds that so strikes us; it is His manifest appreciation of these, His delight in them, His grateful sense of the service rendered. Faults there would be in these labors, but He sees none; imperfections in the endurances of trial, but He makes mention of none. He speaks as one full of gratitude for favors conferred. He weighs the works and finds them not wanting. He names His servant's name, and is not ashamed to confess him. He points not merely to the cup of cold water, but to the toil and the testimony, and the faithful discipline; commending them, rejoicing in them, thanking His servant for them. And not till He has done all this, and shown how well He remembers and appreciates each act of happy service, does He come in with the complaint, "Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." What tenderness, what delicacy, what nobleness of love, what divine courtesy is here! What an honor is put upon our poor doings and endurings for Him, when they are thus so gratefully recounted and so generously commended by the Son of God! What an importance, what a dignity, what a value is thus affixed to every act, even of the simplest, commonest service for Him!

But our text goes beyond all this. It teaches us His desire for our love, and His disappointment at losing it, or any part of it. It is not so much our labor as our love that He asks; and with nothing less than love can He be satisfied. As God He *claims* it; as man He *desires* it; as the God-man He presents to us this mingled claim and longing for love, as that without which He is robbed of His desire and His due. He has not left His true humanity behind Him here in the tomb. He has carried up into heaven His human heart with its yearning affections and cravings for love. Neither the Godhead to which that humanity is united, nor His high throne at the Father's right hand, has, in the least, altered that humanity, or made it less susceptible of love and fellowship. And it is this unchanged and unchangeable manhood that is giving vent to itself in the tender expostulation of our text—"Thou hast left thy first love."

It is the language of wounded friendship, complaining of undeserved estrangement. It is the utterance of unrequited love, mourning over the loss of an affection which was better than life. He wants not merely to love, but to be loved. He seemed to have found this at Ephesus,—that noble Church for which the apostle prayed, that it might be rooted and grounded in love, and might know the love that passeth knowledge. But the kindness of their youth, the love of their espousals, had passed away. The star grew dim, the flower faded, warm love had cooled, and the Ephesus of this second generation was not the Ephesus of the first. Over this lost first love He mourns, as the gem which of all others He had prized the most; and the voice which we hear sounds like that of Rachel in Ramah, weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted because they are not.

It is not of slothful service, or waning zeal, or failing liberality, or slackening warfare, that He complains. His remonstrance rather assumes the existence of much Christian fruitfulness; and even though there had been some failure in labor or endurance, that might have been more easily remedied; nor were these such a necessity to him who filleth all in all. But it is over lost love that He laments; lost love, for which there can be no compensation and no substitute, even to Him; lost love, which cuts so keenly even into the callous heart of man, and leaves such life-long blanks even in common and inferior souls.

Yet it is not love altogether lost, nor love turned into hatred. The failure has not got so far as this, nor descended to such a depth. It is of ebbing love He speaks, not love dried up wholly; it is love that has lost the freshness and the edge of other days; love that has sunk below the temperature at which it once stood. This is the substance of the complaint, the burden of the disappointment—the loss of *half* a heart! So that it would almost seem as if the total drying up would have been more endurable than this ebbing; as if the entire withholding would have been less painful than the stinted giving; as if complete and downright cessation would have been, as in the case of

Digitized by Google

Laodicea, so in that of Ephesus, less hateful than this diminution, this declining to a lower range of feeling, this grudging gift of a divided heart where once there was love entire.

Strange that the risen Christ, the ascended King, should feel so much the loss of a creature-love; that He should be, as one may say, so dependent on our affection: that He should treat this failure, not so much as an affront or a crime, but as a wound and a blank; that He should be touched with the alienation of half a heart, and speak of it as a bereavement and a sorrow! Oh what must be His estimate of love; what must be the value of our own love to Him; and what is the honor put on us by a condescension so amazing as this!

A complaint like this, coming from any quarter, is deeply touching. The wife has ceased to love the husband; the husband has ceased to love the wife; the brother has ceased to love the brother or the sister; the friend has ceased to love the friend; these are complaints which we recognize as real among ourselves, seeing we are so dependent for happiness upon each other's love. But that a complaint like this should come down from heaven; from Him who has the Father's love and all the love of angels; from Him to whom they sing, in their everlasting songs, "blessing and honor and glory and power;" to whom they ascribe "riches, and wisdom, and strength," is far more profoundly affecting, and appeals to every noble and tender feeling of our nature, with irresistible potency. What true-hearted man but must be humbled and melted down beneath it? Why should He love so much, and I so little? Why should He love so truly, so constantly, so warmly, and I return Him nothing but fickleness, and insincerity, and coldness? Why should *He* be so concerned about my love, and I so careless about *His?* Is *my* love so precious, and *His* so worthless? Where but in His own infinitely loving and lovable nature can I find a reason for a difference so strange? How marvellous and how affecting to hear Him mourn over the changed affection of one of the least of His saints on earth; and to hear Him say, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love!" What should move Him to desire my love, and to grieve, when it is withheld, or when given for a time and then withdrawn? Has He not love enough in heaven? That *one* pulse in the universe should beat more feebly, what should that be to the infinite heart above? She who rules that empire on which the sun never sets, needs not to trouble herself though one worthless subject should forswear allegiance. The ocean does not miss the exhaled drop, nor the forest the faded leaf, nor the sun one wandering ray. Why, then, should He, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, care so much about the waning love of Ephesus, the loss of the one-half of a human heart? Yes; why should He? Why? but because He is love; and because His thoughts are not our thoughts, nor His ways our ways. He who could utter a complaint like this, and utter it with such manifest sincerity and earnestness, yet with such gentleness and delicacy of tone and word, must be One of whom we cannot know too much. "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love," are words which embody as precious a revelation of the mind of the ascended Christ, as the more explicit announcement, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." And do they not wonderfully teach us the deep meaning of the old words of the Song of Songs, "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm; for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly contemned." (Cant. 8:6.)

But let us follow out a little further this divine rebuke, this touching remonstrance.

"Thou hast left thy first love." And for what reason? Did the coldness begin on my side or on thine? Have I been to thee a wilderness or a land of darkness? What iniquity or unkindness have you found in me to justify your change? Canst thou point to one word or deed of mine as an excuse for the withdrawal of thy heart? Have I become less lovable, less loving?

Digitized by Google

"Thou hast left thy first love!" And what or whom hast thou substituted? Has thy power of loving ceased, and thy heart contracted? Or is there some second love that has usurped the place of the first? Is it the world that has thus come in? Is it pleasure? Is it literature or science? Is it business? Is it the creature in some of its various forms, and with the seductive glitter of its many-sided beauty? What, oh what, is the equivalent for a lost first love? And is there in this new, this second love, a satisfying substitute, a sufficient compensation to thy soul for a loss so infinite? To one who has looked upon Jerusalem, what is there in Egypt or Babylon, in Rome or in Athens to admire? To one who has got a glimpse of the heavenly Jerusalem, what is there in all the splendor of earth to attract or satisfy? He whose eyes have seen the King in His beauty (if ever he lower his love to any meaner object), must bear about with him an aching heart, an uneasy, dissatisfied eye.

"Thou hast left thy first love!" And what hast thou gained by the leaving? What has this strange turn of capricious affection done for you? Has it made you a happier, holier, truer, stronger, more noble, more earnest man? Has it disarmed the world's enmity, has it conciliated the devil, has it nerved you for the battle with principalities and powers of hell? Has this scattering, over a hundred objects, of affections that were lately centred upon One brought with it enlargement and liberty, an increase of joy and peace? Ah, ask your hearts, what has been your gain? A few indulgences which once you did not dare to venture on. A few gay smiles of worldly companionship. A few pleasures for which, till your first love had gone, you had no relish. A more unrestrained enjoyment of the things which perish with the using; a keener appetite for trifles and frivolities, for foolish talking and jesting; a contentment with forms, and names, and words, and creeds, and doctrines; a wider sympathy with fashion and vanity; less decision and more compromise; weaker recoil from the lusts of the flesh and the lusts of the eye and the pride of life; growing desire for reunion with a present evil world in its amusements and tastes, its revellings and banquetings, its self-pleasings, its flesh-pleasings, its love of show and costly attire. These are some of the things for which thou hast exchanged thy first love! For these thou hast sold thy Lord! Judge for yourselves if the bargain has been a good one; if the thirty pieces of the world's silver by which thine eye has been attracted and thy heart won will prove an equivalent for a lost first love. One day or other it will cost you dear. Sooner or later you will repent of your bargain and bewail your folly. Remember, that "no man having drunk old wine straightway desireth new; for, he saith, the old is better."

Thou hast not indeed renounced Christ; but thou hast come down from thy noble elevation. Thou hast not perhaps ceased to love Him, but thou lovest Him *less;* and other objects have now a place side by side with Him who once filled up thy heart so as to leave no room for a rival affection. Thou mayest possess many things (as thy gracious Master kindly allows), but thou hast failed in love. Thou hast a name among the churches; thou hast intelligence, wisdom, wealth, honor, position, influence, political and social standing, but thou hast left thy first love! Nay, thou hast zeal, hatred of error, patience, courage, perseverance in well-doing; but thou hast left thy first love! Insignificant as a descent like this may be in the eyes of men, it is great indeed in the estimation of Him who prizes *love* above all gifts and offerings; above all gold and frankincense and myrrh; for is it not written, "Now abideth faith, hope, *love*, these three; but the greatest of these is *love*." What, then? Though "thou couldst speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and hast not *love*, thou art become sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal."

And who art thou who thinkest it a light thing to give but half a heart to Him who asks the whole, to Him who loved thee and gave Himself for thee? Who art thou that claimest the liberty of giving or withholding affection at thy pleasure? Dost thou not call to mind the twice-repeated question of Thy risen Lord, "Lovest thou me?" And what wilt thou answer Him when He comes again in His glory?

Digitized by Google

O heartless Ephesian! Is thy Lord's love nothing to thee? Is His gracious jealousy, His longing for thy love, His grateful remembrance of all thy poor services, His entreaty that thou shouldst repent and do thy first works, His promise "to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God,"—are all these light things in thine eyes? And if all these are trifles. is a warning like this a trifle, "Remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works. Or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent?" and is it a trifle to be told, from lips that cannot lie, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha?"

O heartless Ephesian! retrace thy steps at once. Thou didst run well; who has hindered thee? Begin once more at the beginning. Go back to the fountainhead of love; I mean thy Lord's love to thee, the sinner; there refill thy empty vessel. Go back to the blessed sun, whose light is still as free and brilliant; there rekindle thy dying love; there warm thy cold heart, and learn to love again as thou didst love at first. So shall the love of Christ constrain thee; thou shalt love Him who first loved thee; thou shalt feel the quickening power of the living one; thou wilt rise up again to thy lost temperature, by knowing the love which passeth knowledge, and finding that in spite of all thy fickleness and faithlessness, that love is still the same.

WAITING FOR THE LIGHT.

It appears that a people will be found at the close of the dispensation who shall be looking for the Saviour, or waiting for the return of the Lord, when he shall come. To use the figure which he himself employs, "That you may open to him," whether he comes "at midnight, at the cock crowing, or in the morning." The simple idea is, that of one person sitting up in the night, watching, waiting, looking for another, with this qualification: that the one expected is the beloved Master and Lord, who has kindly cared for the children, servants, and all the members of the family; who has authority to demand this attention and expectation, and whose assurances of future benefit encourage the waiting and self-denial imposed by the conviction of his expected presence, and the fact of his still continued absence. The position is called *blessed*, in the gospel, "Blessed are those servants whom, when the Lord cometh, he shall find so doing." It is really waiting for him: for the light which he will bring. The longing for light may be relieved by the person coming who should appear with the light, or the benefit being obtained which the light should give. Sometimes the presence or the blessing is all we can expect the light to bestow.

Believers are like those who "wait for the morning."

The waiting position implies a readiness beforehand. If a walk or journey is requisite to take us to the station before we start, to wait signifies that we have taken that walk, and are at the station before the train arrives; at least, before the advertised time of leaving.

It is said that General Washington, at one time, upon breaking camp, found his body-servant a little behind in the arrangements for moving. "John," said the General, "do not let me find you thus again." Upon the next occasion he asked John, just before the appointed time for leaving, "Are you ready?"

"All packed up, sir," said John.

There is a plain intimation that the waiting class should suffer a disappointment in their expectations, as to the appearing of the Lord, and that darkness would be the result, while the requirement is that, if he should "tarry," (or seem to delay), "wait for him, he will not tarry, but surely come." This signifies that there will be no real delay—that, at the appointed time the presence will be found; but a seeming tarrying will exist from too full reliance upon calculation.

The real lover of Christ is always waiting for him; but more especially when the intimation of his return (signs) are patent. These, before the mind, will excite interest and lead to a looking, as we love a friend and would welcome him at any time, but should sit up for him if he had sent us word that he were coming.

Digitized by Google

If notified to move, the Christian is like John, "all packed up."

The mariners in the storm wait for the light. The poor shipwrecked sailor on the desolate isle will hail the light. The benighted traveller on the dark unknown road longs for the light. It is his life, strength, and salvation. The sick, who must lie and wait for the morning, cannot but feel that there is a blessing in the light. They wait for it. Many a time did I say, last summer, as the darkness gathered in for gloom, "I must try to pass another long, weary night," and the nights were not literally long after the fitful and broken slumber which the fever would allow. I watched for the first signs of light, and for the light itself. There is company and society in the light. A man is not alone in the light. The merry songsters in that old tree by the window—the beautiful robin, whose shrill notes would never fail by 3 o'clock, in the short summer night, often led me to wait patiently for the sun rising. I knew it was close by.

Brethren, the tried people are said to wait, even to be children of the light. They are aroused by the song. They love the light that will break on the vision in the morning hour. That will wake a deathless joy in the heart.

"Long, long we have been waiting," may the tried flock well sing, and with the joy and interest of a "faith that does not shrink," though long time elapse before the realization of the fond hope of immortality.

"We are waiting still, dear Lord, for thee," is a sentiment which swells the heart of the tried pilgrim on the stormy path of life, and now the illumination of a new glory bursts on the true but weary hearts—left long trusting and looking—confirmed, at the last, by the answer of the event to the prediction.

"Then, waiting brethren, let us sing. He will not tarry long."

This is the grand point to occupy, with life, vigor, zeal, and earnest joy—a determined, happy labor, an unabated, undying devotion. God will reward the effort of the faithful soul .... to stand, to study and wait for truth, with the light. He will make known his purpose to his servants, the prophets, and the light of God in the kingdom of heaven shall be the portion of the vigilant and faithful in their watch for the rays of the everlasting morning.

Editorial.

THE BRIDE.

"Bride of the Lamb, I'm one in heart
With thee, through boundless grace."

In once more reading the Parable of the Ten Virgins, there is one thing which strikes us forcibly. Something, of which few or none, of the numerous expositors seem to have taken notice. It is this: "*Where is the Bride?*" Here is the Bridegroom, and here are the welcoming virgins; but where is the Bride?

There may be those who think they have exhausted the Scriptures. They have read the Bible all through, and they know what is in it. The enlightened believer, however, has not so learned holy things. He understands that in the inspired volume the Holy Spirit treats of God's arrangements and purposes, and is aware that this subject is very comprehensive. It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than hell; what canst thou know? Our Lord, when speaking of the kingdom of heaven, finished by saying: "Every scribe who is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." The Jewish church was slow to comprehend the sufferings of the Messiah. And, at present, too, the New Testament church is slow to comprehend the things concerning the kingdom: too much inclined to say: "I am rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing." She has quite lost sight of the dis-

Digitized by Google

tinction between the coming of the Lord Jesus *for* His people, and *with* them. Instead of looking for His presence, she, at best, expects first the threatened judgments. Is it not quite possible then, yea, even highly probable, that there are matters of plain revelation to which the Church now is even more blind than the Jews of old were to the sufferings of our Lord, spoken of by the prophets, which the prophets, and the chief prophet, mention far more frequently than those sufferings?

Those, too, who have most earnestly studied the more sure word of prophecy, are painfully conscious of their slowness of comprehension in times past, respecting matters that are now quite plain to their minds. They are, therefore, ever open to conviction, and rejoice over a newly discovered Scripture truth as one that findeth great spoil.

Some one might say: "Can there be anything new in Scripture?" Undoubtedly nothing but what was there before. There are no additions now to the sacred canon. But why not new to our apprehension? Else why the command to grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ? Or why would the Holy Ghost tell us twice over that grace and peace are multiplied to us *through the knowledge of Him* that hath called us to glory and virtue? Or why would the Psalmist pray: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law?"

We have been recently meditating much on the Bride of Christ, and the great things that are revealed to us as awaiting her. What tongue can express the position, the glory, the love, the beauty, the excellencies, the peculiarities, of her whom the divine Bridegroom hath betrothed unto Himself in righteousness, upon the cross! This is a great mystery. We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

The Bride is, unquestionably, the Church. The *ecclesia*, the select choice. Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that He might present it unto Himself a glorious church, not having spot nor wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be made known *by the Church*, the manifold wisdom of God.

The term, bride, or wife, is a comprehensive one. When used in a generic sense, it includes, so to speak, her whole household: all her train and appurtenances, constituting, with her, a complete whole. Thus, in the 21st chapter of the Revelation, we are told that the angel promised to show John the bride, the Lamb's wife, and pointed out to him that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. This city, therefore, is evidently the complete body of God's elect. In Revelation 19, we read: "The marriage of the Lamb hath come, and His wife hath made herself ready." In Revelation 21:2, we read: "I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

But while it is evident that the Church forms but one great body—one complete whole—it may yet include great diversities, and marked distinctions of parts, just as our natural human body does. There may be certain saints to whom belong superior functions, and superior position, who occupy more prominent places. In fact, such is, beyond all doubt, the case. It is a matter of positive revelation. And there may be a number to whom, as a prominent part, without excluding the rest, the appellation bride par excellence belongs.

Nor is this arrangement confined to the Church. It is a fundamental principle throughout the order of creation. Infinite diversity blended with grand unity. It holds good of the material universe, and it is true of the intelligent creation. One star differeth from another star in glory. Yet each galaxy of stars seems to have its own marked characteristics. Who can tell where the limits of creation are? The penetrating power of Ross's great telescope probably only reaches the outer sphere of the stellar glories. Is it not mentioned as a distinctive characteristic of the divine greatness, that "He telleth the number of the stars, He

Digitized by Google

calleth them all by their names." As though no created mind could grasp the mighty whole. As though, in surveying the expanse of the universe, even "imagination's utmost stretch in wonder dies away."

In the angelic ranks, too, there are great distinctions. Their orders are mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures as dominions, thrones, principalities, powers. There is also an archangel, Michael. So also among the fallen angels and demons there is a similar gradation. "Master, why could not we cast him out?" In His reply, Jesus remarked: "Howbeit, *this kind* goeth not out, save by prayer and fasting." Here the gradations are, chiefs, powers, world-rulers of the darkness of this age, spirit ones of the wickedness in the regions of space. And that part of the material creation which, in our own earth, falls under man's eye, and is subject to his inspection, shows the same wise diversity, gradations, and unity. Order, it has been said, is heaven's first law.

By analogy, then, we might infer the same to hold good of the Church. But we are not left to conjecture: we have positive and abundant information on this point. The spirit divides to every man severally as He will. God hath set the members, every one of them, in the body as it hath pleased Him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. Those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary. God hath tempered the body together. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. Covet earnestly the best gifts. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honor, and some to dishonor. Our Lord says: "Not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law, until all be fulfilled." God having settled this point, the consequence is: "Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called *the least* in the kingdom of heaven." "There are last that shall be first." He will give unto every believer according to his works. Therefore, "look to yourselves that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a *full* reward." (2 John, 8.) Have ye suffered so many things in vain? If it (could be) in vain. Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor.

Without multiplying proofs of these future distinctions in the Church, which could easily be done, let us only note one thing more, which, of itself, is sufficient to demonstrate the point. When we read the revelation of the events of the day of the Lord, which the Lord Jesus gave to us by His servant John, do we find the Church complete at the opening of the sealed book? On the contrary, the Church is not complete until the marriage of the Lamb, or shortly before it. Successive companies are gathered in, and each has its distinctive position. First we find those introduced in chapter 4, who sing the new song in chapter 5. Then the great multitude in chapter 7, who come out of the great tribulation. Then the harvest of the earth in chapter 14. Then those who stand on the sea of glass in chapter 15.

In the Old Testament, too, we have allusions to the same differences. In Ps. 45, we read of the queen, of the king's daughter, and of the virgins, her companions that follow her. In Canticles 6:8, we find mentioned threescore queens, fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. Yet in the next verse, "My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother; she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her."

We are now prepared to return to the Parable of the Ten Virgins, and to repeat our opening inquiry. Here is the Bridegroom, and here are the virgins; *but where is the bride?* Behold the fire, and the wood; but where is the lamb? May it not be so, that amid the totality constituting the Lamb's wife, there are some who, in a yet narrower sense, constitute the bride? May not these be a bride proper, who notwithstanding, is in the completeness of her full retinue, and thus only designated by the general term, the New Jerusalem, the Lamb's wife?

Digitized by Google

This may startle some readers. But let them turn to Rev. 5, and they will find a distinction hardly less positive. For there we have the living* ones nearest to the Lord. They are in the midst of the throne, and in the circle of the throne.

They are, as the narrative shows, the executors of the judgments; for they give the word of command, "Go;" or as our version unfortunately says, "Come."† In an outer circle are the twenty-four elders, constituting a distinct body. Yet that they both belong to the glorified redeemed, is evident from the narrative. Both are already glorified; both sing the same song of thanksgiving for redemption; both are become kings, and priests to God; and both expect to reign on the earth. Therefore, the existence of a special company is neither unnatural nor unprecedented. Indeed it is possible, perhaps probable, that the living ones and the bride are identical.

There are two things in the parable of the Ten Virgins which strike us as unusua'ly and almost universally overlooked. The most prominent of these is, *the time when the virgins go forth*—a most important matter. It is expressly stated to be "*then*." And this word refers back to the sudden rapture or translation of the eagle saints, from among those who are sleeping, grinding at the mill, or working in the field. Such a rapture would, indeed, be most extraordinary. Entirely miraculous, and beyond the previous experience of the Christian Church in her whole history. This rapture likewise plainly supplies the reason of the going forth of the virgins. Neither is this going forth a common procession, but a going out for a very special and extraordinary purpose, viz., to meet the Bridegroom.* That the Christian Church, as a whole, does not, at present, look for the near coming of Jesus, is perfectly evident to every one. But here we see what will rouse it to do so. And there is every reason to believe that this grand miracle is imminent. But whenever it occurs, here is the manner in which the churches will be led to receive the plain teachings of the Scriptures respecting the Kingdom, to which, at present, they turn a deaf ear, and thus preach only half the Gospel.

But there is another thing in the Parable of the Virgins, which, likewise, is almost universally overlooked. It is, that the Virgins do not await the coming of Jesus, simply, nor yet the coming of Jesus as the appointed judge of all. The judgment, as usually understood, is not even mentioned in the parable. The Virgins in the parable contemplate Jesus exclusively in the character of a *Bridegroom*. What is it, then, which, at this time, has produced so marvellous a change in the views of the Church at large? For it is not worth while to stop to prove that the Ten Virgins symbolize the true Church. The ungodly are never, in the Scriptures, likened to virgins. It would be an unfortunate comparison, such as Holy Writ is never guilty of. Still less do the ungodly have oil. What is it, then, we say, that *now* makes the mind of the Church run so entirely on the Bridegroom? Something extraordinary must have happened. The Bride is gone. It is self-evident from the narrative, that the cause is *the removal of those that were "taken."* And the conclusion is almost irresistible that they were "taken" by the Lord, at that time, exclusively in his capacity as the heavenly Bridegroom. As the Bridegroom, the Church suddenly recognizes him. The virgins do not go out to meet the Lord, nor the Saviour, nor the King, nor the Lamb, though Christ is all these; but they go forth to meet him who, from some cause, has the special appellation of Bridegroom; not necessarily *their* Bridegroom; ra-

* Our English version unfortunately renders the word "beasts." The word in the Greek is ζωα, or ζωον. It is that from which the word zoology is derived, *i. e.*, the department of knowledge which treats of the animated, or "living" creation. Beasts are animated; but not all animated creatures are beasts.

† The same word in Greek, ερχου, includes both meanings, *come* and *go*; much as in English we would say "move," which may imply either. The words και βλεπε, "and see," are rejected by critics.

* Some of our readers may not be aware that the division of the Scriptures into chapters is a human arrangement, for convenience sake. The breaks between Matt. 24 and 25 interrupts a continuous narrative.

Digitized by Google

ther another's; by the fetching of whom as His bride, his nuptial capacity has been demonstrated and made prominent. Strange that people should have supposed the virgins to be the Bride On marriage occasions nobody confounds the bridesmaids with the bride! Though they may be dressed exactly alike, the position of the bridegroom towards them makes the distinction sufficiently apparent.

Therefore we are led to the conclusion that if the Eagle Saints do not, by themselves, constitute the Bride, they, at least, are the first, and a most important constituent part of the Bride. And it is as though the Church, at the going forth of the virgins, understood this fully. As though they were repeating: "We now see that before the Lord Jesus comes with His saints, He first takes them to Himself." Indeed, He must necessarily do so, if they are to be revealed from heaven with Him. We now see that before He comes as Judge of all, He must come to His own people as Bridegroom. The bride's affections are evermore centred in her betrothed; therefore she is ever eagerly expecting his coming to celebrate the nuptials. Those of the Lord's people who were in this frame of mind had the true bridal spirit. For the Spirit and the Bride (whatever others may not do) evermore have prayed: "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" Therefore the Lord has fetched His faithful waiting ones. But as we denied and explained away the coming kingdom itself, we have hitherto not understood this. *But now we see* that as soon as the rest of His elect have the same feelings, he will, doubtlessly, fetch them too. We now see our guilty neglect of the prophetic word, and the lamentable consequences it had as regards our spiritual condition. We now see what a loss we have sustained because we were not, as Jesus expected and commanded His disciples to be, always, in our time, waiting, like the Thessalonian and Corinthian churches of old, for the Son of God from heaven. (1 Thess. 1:10; 2 Thess. 1:5; 1 Cor. 1:7.) Hence it is that the Church at large, as represented by the Ten Virgins, goes forth to meet the Bridegroom. They hope to go in to the marriage. For it is written: "Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

The Bride, we repeat, is not once mentioned in the parable! And, surely, the bride plays a main part on a nuptial occasion.

So far as we have been able to gather, the Oriental custom was that *the bridegroom had already fetched his bride*, when the company of virgins went out to meet him. To show this, we introduce an extract from the commentary most convenient at the moment of the present writing—Barnes's Notes: "Marriage ceremonies in the East were conducted with great pomp and solemnity. The *ceremony* of marriage was performed commonly in the open air,* on the banks of a stream. Both the bridegroom and bride were attended by friends; they were escorted in a *palanquin*, carried by four or more persons. After the ceremony of marriage succeeded a feast of seven days if the bride was a virgin, or three days if she was a widow. This feast was celebrated in her father's house. At the end of that time the bridegroom conducted the bride, with great pomp and splendor, to his own home. This was done in the evening, or at night. (Jer. 7:34; 25:10; 33:11.) Many friends and relations attended them; and besides those who went with them from the house of the bride, there was another company that came out from the house of the bridegroom to meet and welcome them. These were probably female friends and relatives of the bridegroom, who went out to welcome him and his new companion to their home. These are the virgins mentioned in the parable. Not knowing *precisely* the time when the procession would come, they probably went out early, and waited by the way till they should see indications of its approach." (Barnes's Notes on Matt. 25.)

In the parable, then, it would seem, the Bridegroom has already fetched His Bride. The Ten Virgins now go forth to welcome Him as such, but the Bride is not in *their* company. Let the thoughtful reader reflect on this. While the virgins wait, the bridegroom is celebrating his nuptials. The virgins are waiting until the bridegroom shall "return from the wedding." (Luke 12:36.)

* Compare 1 Thess. 4:17.

Digitized by Google

It should be carefully noted that Paul, in addressing believers, in Phil. 3:15, says, by the Holy Ghost: "Let as many as be perfect (or complete) be thus minded." He refers to his anxious endeavor to attain to *the prize* of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; which he designates as "the out-resurrection of the dead." It is self-evident that in this passage he could not refer to the general resurrection of all men, nor yet even to the ordinary resurrection of all believers; no, not even to the "first resurrection," as such. For he, above all men, shared in those privileges which are common to all true disciples. He evidently refers to some special attainment, which, even in his case, so far as his own knowledge went was not yet absolutely determined. The high probability is, that he referred to the privileges connected with the taking of the Eagle Saints. For it is not at all likely that their number will be restricted to those who are at that time alive, and have remained unto the *parousia*—not the epiphany—of the Lord. Indeed we are expressly told that such shall not have the precedence over those who are asleep, but that the *dead in* Christ shall first rise. We may suppose this language respecting the precedence to be a general statement applicable to each successive company that is removed.

Those, then, that have fallen asleep in the true spirit of bridal expectancy (and whose inner development in holiness and likemindedness to Christ has, as a matter of course—1 John 3:3—kept equal pace), shall share with the "living ones" who are found, at the Bridegroom's call, in the same attitude. Together they will probably form a large body; the number of the dead Eagle Saints, so to speak (that is, of those who had the same attitude), far exceeding that of the living raptured ones; insomuch, perhaps, that the latter will be comparatively but a handful; especially because our Lord says: "When the Son of Man cometh shall He find *the* faith upon the earth?"

We may, perhaps, regard the "Elders," in Rev. 4 and 5, as being the Old Testament saints. The name would seem to imply this; and the twenty-four courses of priests correspond with their number. Yet if the "living ones" are the Eagle Saints in the strict sense of the word, that is, those *alive* at the time of the first rapture, the elders might represent, or include, the older saints of the Christian dispensation. We do not find data to determine this positively. Our Lord says to Martha: "The 'living one' (ὁ ζων) and believing in me, shall" (emphatically, οὐ μη) "not die unto the age" (εις τον αἰωνα). That the Elders, as well as the "Living Ones," represent a large body is evident from their song. Both classes sing, "Thou hast redeemed us out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation."

But whether the Living Ones symbolize only the living, raptured Eagle Saints, while the dead of the same spirit are among the Elders, or whether both classes are represented by the Living Ones—there seems no room for doubting that those who share in Paul's *brabeion* (that "prize" of which he speaks in Philippians 2), are in heaven, glorified and crowned, together with the living raptured ones, at the opening of The Day of the Lord.

In reflecting on this great subject there is much to bring into prominence both the sovereign electing grace of God, and the reward according to works. According to your faith be it unto you.

Some might object, that such a distinction in rank or in position would introduce into the bliss of the redeemed a drop of bitterness. Let those who are inclined to think so remember that, while our Lord himself intimates that there shall be some, or one, least of all, and servant of all, in the coming kingdom, the glorified ones shall be made perfect, and be no longer encompassed with infirmity. Among them envy is unknown: and so also is hauteur on the part of those occupying higher positions. The rule in the kingdom of heaven is, that the highest are the most ready to serve. The Lord Jesus washed his disciples' feet, and said: "I have given you an example, that *ye* should do, as *I* have done to you." "I am among you as he that serveth. He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is *chief*, as he that doth serve!" And we all, with unvailed face, beholding in a mirror the glory of the Lord (shall be), are transformed into the same image.

E. E. R.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. IX. APRIL, 1871. No. 4.

Special Contributions.

SUFFERING FOR CHRIST.

"Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake." (Phil. 1 : 29.)

"Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you : But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings ; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Peter 4 : 12, 13.)

"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8 : 18.)

These passages teach that the Christian course in this present life is to be one of warfare, toil, and suffering. There is no intimation that what are esteemed pleasures, enjoyments, and emoluments by the seekers after worldly good, shall ever be the possessions of God's children ; they are distinctly forewarned that it is through much tribulation they shall enter the kingdom ; and that their career lies through persecution's flames, worldly deprivations, hatred, and many diverse forms of afflictions and suffering. True, godliness is great gain, and has the promise of the present life as well as of that which is to come. And it is great gain ; for the spiritual profit that accrues to the truly godly by these very sufferings is more than a compensation for the loss of ease and comfort, even in this present world. The peace, patience, submission to God's will as manifested in His providences: the intimate knowledge of God's purposes in these adverse dispensations and cheerful acquiescence therein, acquired alone by such an experience, is gain of inestimable value. Ask the sufferer if he would be willing to relinquish such acquisitions and such knowledge for those learnt in the school of prosperity. At some period of his life he has had experience in that school, but he has found how insufficient are its acquirements for solid peace and comfort, even in this life. Does he not realize with unalterable conviction that "*all* things work together for good to those who love God?" and knowing that the deeper the humiliation the higher the corresponding exaltation, he feels that his sufferings are indeed gain beyond computation.

The Gospel is so truly regarded as joyful news of glad tidings ; and the good providence of God has so removed the outward disabilities that in days of primitive Christianity accompanied a public acknowledgment of Him ; and it is so persistently represented that the Church is to go on in one brilliant career of conquest —conquering and to conquer—until sin is exterminated by its progress, and peace, prosperity, and righteousness reign throughout all her borders ; that all we have to do is to believe and appropriate Christ's expiatory work, and we have discharged our Christian obligations ; that nothing on our part is possible or required ; and, consequently, vast numbers are settled at their ease in Zion, with very wrong impressions as to what is involved in a profession of religion. "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." We are to "rejoice ever more," and the consciousness of forgiven sin and ultimate salvation, should so fill our hearts with gladness, and so manifest itself on our countenance and in our demeanor,

Digitized by Google

that many may thus be allured to these pleasant paths who would be deterred from entering by the repulsion of a sad and lengthened visage. True, but cannot Christians rejoice even in tribulation? Are not wisdom's ways those of pleasantness and her paths peace when our earthly horizon is only overclouded with gloom? When our Lord tells us that we are to be crucified with Him, and that the cross we are to bear must be a daily one, do we not *then* find wisdom's ways pleasantness and her paths peace? Do we realize it thus only in the converse of this? Do we find joy, pleasure, and profit only in an exemption from suffering? Can we rejoice ever more only when the rod is not applied? And in everything give thanks only when fortune's smiles and joy's perpetual cheer beam gaily around us? St. James tells us to count it *all joy* when we fall into divers temptations. St. Paul says that it is given unto us *not only to believe* in Christ, but also to suffer for His sake. And St. Peter assures us if we are reproached for the name of Christ, *happy are we.* Oh! have such persons only learnt the first principles of the doctrine of Christ? And have they never yet experienced the sublime joy of suffering for His sake? Christ has suffered so much on their behalf, that they feel all *they* have to do is to revel in the anticipation of a consummated salvation and a secured kingdom with its glorious accompaniments. And, as they are content with so little, God allows them to choose their own portion. To reign with Him as His bride is optional with them, but the cross involves too much sacrifice, self-denial, suffering. They will have the full glories and results of redemption in this present life, and hereafter must be satisfied to take very low places in the kingdom. Those who can only rejoice when prosperity's sun shines with unclouded rays, and when God's providences are only agreeable to their natural feelings and tastes, and are grieved if a severe course of discipline compromises their ease and enjoyment, are those who follow Him for the sake of the loaves and fishes,—who do not love Him for Himself alone in distinction from His gifts. They have not duly counted the cost of the warfare, and although they have laid the foundation, they are not able to finish the superstructure. Although they may be saved, so as by fire, yet they must ultimately suffer loss; and their wood, hay, and stubble consumed in the flames kindled by Almighty wrath for the destruction of incorrigible sinners. It is sad, indeed, to have a portion even temporarily with such; and sadder still to think of eternal exclusion from kingly dignities and bliss. The religion of the present day seems to be such an easy and pleasure-taking one, and so many are led astray by false teaching, that we are convinced this subject imperatively demands earnest attention at this time.

Our blessed Lord has never given any intimation that the cross shall be removed from His Church in the present age, either in its aggregate capacity, or as regards individual members of it. They are to mourn and fast all the days of the Bridegroom's absence: for the fact of His protracted tarrying is a sufficient cause for sorrow, irrespective of the personal trials and sufferings to which they are subjected. He forewarns His disciples of the many hardships, toils, and persecutions which they must undergo, and gives not the slightest encouragement to hope that the experience of His children in the succeeding ages of the world shall be essentially different from that of His primitive disciples. There may be many dissimilar forms of suffering and trial, but the fact itself remains, that "*all* that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." There is a time of blessed release to be anticipated with joy and gladness; but it is not to be in the present dispensation, when the servant must be *as* his Lord, and by his humiliation be prepared for his subsequent exaltation, —to make the correspondence between his earthly career and that of his blessed Master as complete as possible. The idea seems to be widely prevalent that the performance of a routine of outward religious duties, and rejoicing in the prospect of salvation, is the full accomplishment of our Christian obligations. We have previously shown that an entire consecration of ourselves and our possessions to His disposal,—in spirit and in truth,—is abso-

Digitized by Google

lutely essential to the completion of the perfect man in Christ Jesus; and we now wish to demonstrate that suffering for His sake is a part of the glorious process, and our great privilege as well as duty.

For His sake.

What greatly enhances the value of these sufferings, is that they are endured for Christ's sake. Whilst they show a parallel between our earthly lot and His; whilst they are an evidence of our assimilation to Him; and whilst His great goodness designs them as part of the means of our own growth in grace and purification, the sweetest thought of all is that they are borne for His sake, and He is glorified thereby. Some draw a distinction between sufferings endured for Christ's sake, and those more especially intended for our own purgation; but this is surely a distinction without a difference. Is not all suffering designed for that end? And is not the end eventually attained if we voluntarily and cheerfully accept the means in acknowledgment of the purpose, with the specific design of God's glorification therein? Must not all sanctified suffering redound to His glory?

If our distinct object in voluntary submission to the disciplinary process which secures this end, is the entire subjugation of our carnal nature that God may thus be glorified in us and by us as He could not be without this transformation, is not the great motive for the endurance of the suffering a desire to please Him? And if we were not His disciples, the subjects of His love and supervision, would we be called to this special suffering? Are we not then clearly enduring it for His sake? We are so desirous of bearing His image, and approximating as closely to His character as mortal may, that we are ready to accept any degree of suffering to secure the result. The assumption of it is perfectly voluntary,—it is never made obligatory,—and a want of acquiescence in God's will would certainly secure an exemption from it. He will not compel us to become priests and kings, and if we prefer the honors of this world, we can have our preference. We are free to choose,—if we were still of the world we would have no such intensity of desire; and if we are lukewarm Christians we will surely shrink from such a scathing ordeal. It is in consequence of our position as Christians, and our desire to bear the image of the heavenly here, that we are subjected to these sufferings; consequently, they are borne for His sake; and His goodness is such, that our suffering for His sake, and our own good, are inseparably connected. Oftentimes, too, we are called to forms of suffering of so mysterious a character that it is impossible, with our finite faculties, to form any conception as to its design; and our only motive for the cheerful endurance of it, is submission to God's will, and an earnest desire that He shall be glorified in us as His wisdom sees best. This is surely suffering for Christ's sake, when there is no obvious advantage to ourselves, other than that which must result from loving resignation to His will.

Chastisements and afflictions are the surest evidences of God's love to us, and yet how do our weak human natures shrink from them. The salutary, but bitter, medicine we reject with as much loathing as little children do the nostrums provided by earthly physicians. Although we might believe the representations of our heavenly Father as to their efficacy, we prefer acting the part of the wayward little ones, and pettishly thrust aside the distasteful draught. He acknowledges that the present effects are not joyous, but grievous; but should not His assurance be sufficient to convince us that *afterward* they yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness? But we are, indeed, only children of larger growth, and cannot endure present discomfort for a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

He tells us that these *afflictions* work for us this glory. Salvation, of course, is only attained through our blessed Saviour's blood, but it is the amount of self-denial, toil, and suffering endured for His sake that entitles us to this great weight of glory. It is astonishing how afflictions can have this effect; but it is undeniable that the most deeply afflicted of God's people have ever lived the nearest to Him. Deprived by His providence of so many

Digitized by Google

earthly objects of affection, their hearts are given exclusively to Him. They abide in Him and He in them; and discovering the unutterable sweetness and advantage of this close union, they do not regret the deprivation of earthly hopes and affections,—although the relinquishment of them, in the first instance, occasioned greater anguish than the sacrifice of an eye, or of any member of their physical frame.

The circumstances attending our position in life often expose us to great danger and temptation, from which afflictions are our only safeguards. Our temperaments, too, are so diverse, that different methods of discipline are often required to suit the various cases. How little can most persons bear a permanent course of prosperity. How small a portion of their love have many bestowed upon a jealous God,—who will not accept a fragment of a heart,—until the objects of earthly idolatry were rent from them by a stroke that almost annihilated them. How attractive was the world, its riches, its elegancies, its pleasures, its works of art, so captivating to a refined taste, until a financial disaster suddenly engulfed all the means requisite to gratify these tastes; and they have then discovered charms, riches, beauties, and pleasures in Christ Jesus, beside which all others fade into contemptible insignificance.

What would be a severe affliction to persons of sensitive temperaments would be but little regarded by those of a coarser mould of character; and trials are very often afflictions to us or not as our cast of character happens to make them such. But God avails Himself of these constitutional peculiarities to accomplish His own purposes; and sometimes a life-long series of sufferings result from these peculiarities of temperament coming in conflict. He chooses afflictions as His most efficient auxiliaries; and He has different mediums of conveying them, but all with the same definite object in view. Suffering, too, must be the inevitable consequence of a consistently Christian course in a godless world; but we believe that one especial object of suffering is to complete the analogy between our blessed Lord's human life and that of His genuine disciple; and because the climax of holiness, greatness, and happiness is reserved for the world to come.

Highest honors dependent on suffering. "If we *suffer* with Him, we shall reign with Him." 2 Tim. 2:12. "*If so be that we suffer with Him*, that we may be also glorified together." Romans 8:17. "*Inasmuch* as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Peter 2:13; James 1:12. And it is a most remarkable fact that our Saviour Himself was made perfect through suffering. Heb. 2:10. We know what these honors are. A participation in the first translation or resurrection, and a consequent exemption from the unparalleled suffering of the great tribulation. It is being accounted *worthy* to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of Man. When the terrific woes that are now held in abeyance, because the number of the elect is yet incomplete, and because Christ's bride and royal household are yet denizens of this earth, shall descend in all the fury of long-delayed retribution's fires, causing unmitigated anguish to the inhabitants of the globe, and convulsions political and physical from centre to circumferance, they shall be partaking of the marriage-supper of the Lamb. He has made up His jewels, and His royal crown glitters with a celestial sheen, and His bride, in luminous array, shares His radiant throne and glory. They are with Christ, and they "smile at the storm." The tempest breaks, and it scatters devastation far and wide, but it comes not near them. One hour of such bliss is ample reparation for a lifetime of anguish and self-denial. His smile of welcome says, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Their fellow-disciples, with whom they often took sweet counsel, and walked to the house of God in company, are left behind,—simply because they cast too longing a look upon Sodom's fascinations. Whilst streams of martyr-blood enrich the soil upon which it flows, they are enjoying the fruition of all faith's visions, and a sanctified imagination's conceptions. They listen to Paul, as he relates with his own burn-

Digitized by Google

ing eloquence, now purified, all that the Lamb has done for him, and how he has conquered through His blood. They hear Peter tell of the tender love that rebuked with a look, and held the tottering sieve in safety, as Satan sifted him as wheat, until the martyr's cross brought him his long-promised crown. They see Mary linger around her Master's feet with sweeter odors than were wafted on Arabian breezes. And John's bright eye shall gleam with still more heavenly lustre as he sings "unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood" And David's sweet harp strikes forth its triumphant melody unto His Son and Lord. With what wonder shall they gaze upon that patriarchal throng, of whom they have so often read and dreamed, who, after the lapse of so many centuries, sit down at their Lord's table with those who come from the uttermost parts of the earth. And there will be Luther, shining as the sun, with starry diadem upon his brow, presenting his open Bible to the King of kings. And there will be the loved and lost of other days, who, by death's portal, entered the "land elysian," restored in radiant loveliness, and welcoming as with celestial joy. And because they *suffered* with Christ, they thus partake of these ineffable joys.

And for the same reason He assures them that they shall reign with Him. His own hand shall crown them as kings, and consecrate them as priests. They shall descend with Him to the earth, and exercise the prerogatives with which they have been invested. His own supernatural might confers the power and bestows the attributes requisite for the proper administration of their new duties. They shall be equal unto the angels, and employed in offices of importance and trust. And whilst they execute their potent commissions of destruction, they might grieve to see their ancient dwelling-place consigned to flames, and the devastation of much that was dear to them in the flesh, did they not know that indestructible glory and beauty are to arise from the chaos. They know that fire is purifying,—they have experienced the efficacy of figurative flames through their earthly career, in its transforming influence,—and they, in like manner, anticipate the renovation of the earth. Their *special* tribulation has secured them their holiness, dignity, and power; and they feel that the great universal tribulation will be effectual in bringing many of their brethren to glory.

WHEN HIS GLORY IS REVEALED,

Then "they shall be glad also with exceeding joy." Although their internal joys have been great, as they believed in the forgiveness of sins, and confidently anticipated the final realization of all the blessed promises, yet their outward circumstances have been such as frequently to cast a shadow over their hearts, clouds upon their faces, and tears within their eyes. They said "Even so, Father, if it seemeth good in Thy sight," but sometimes their human nature prayed that the cup might be removed, if consistent with His glory and their own good. As sin abounded in every direction, and sorrows overwhelmed, a portion of Gethsemane's gloom overshadowed them, and their souls were exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. They prayed and fasted in deep retirement, and in sadness waited until His glory should be revealed. Then they knew they should be glad with exceeding joy. They knew that it was given unto them not only to believe on Christ, but also to suffer for His sake, and anticipated no permanent delight until that glory was revealed. They believed those were happy who endured, and they waited for the revelation in patience and hope.

They watched for it. They watched every historical development with intense interest, and every indication in the moral and political world that harmonized with prophetical statements seemed an annunciation of His near approach. Then their eyes began to sparkle, and their heads became erect, as they recognized the signal of their coming redemption. Their joy alternated with grief as a long heavy silence seemed to proclaim, "My Lord delayeth His coming." But they knew they should be "glad with exceeding joy" when His glory should be revealed, and they did not sink into hopeless despondency and skepticism, but disappointment seemed only a stimulus to greater watchfulness.

Digitized by Google

And yet a faint gleam shot athwart the horizon at last, and they were caught up to the ethereal pavilion. Its luminous portal closed against all malign influences, they waited with an innumerable company of angels, they, the church of the first-born, for the Lord's most glorious epiphany. Antichrist and his confederates were ripe for destruction, the Jews, in their anguish, called on their Messiah for deliverance, the fiery flames of vengeance broke forth in unrestrained fury, and, with the retinue of mighty angels that swell His triumphant train as He makes the long-expected revelation of His glory, they also attend upon Him with joy unspeakable. Who can describe their exceeding gladness then?

Are we not called to this by the repeated command to suffer for Christ's sake? And if He had to learn obedience through suffering, and was promoted to the right hand of God in consequence, should the servant expect or desire to be above his Lord? He endured the cross and despised the shame for the *joy* that was set before Him. Let us gladly suffer all things for His sake, that we may have a full participation in the joy when the glory is revealed. M. E. S.

PROMISES TO THOSE WHO OVERCOME.

In the second and third chapters of the Book of Revelation, we have the epistles which the Lord Jesus Christ directed the Apostle John to write to the seven churches in Asia.

In each of these epistles our Lord says, "I know thy works," thus showing his omniscience, his perfect knowledge of human character, and agreeing with what He says in one of these epistles, viz., "All the churches shall know that I am He who searcheth the reins and the hearts." In each of these epistles we also find this injunction, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." So we are taught to give earnest heed to all the advice, instructions, and warnings contained in these epistles to the churches, that they may be "profitable unto us for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness."

Again, in each of the epistles there is a promise to every one that overcometh; to him that overcometh the world with all its pleasures and allurements, the flesh with all its lusts and passions, and the devil with all his temptations and wiles, and the pernicious doctrines he is ever springing upon the world.

Let us then look at these promises which are indeed exceeding great and precious.

1. The promise to the church at Ephesus.

The Saviour says, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

In the garden of Eden, the first paradise, there was the tree of life, but it does not appear that our first parents ever ate of the fruit of this tree, for after they had eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thus violating the express command of God, they were expelled from the garden: "And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and *live forever*, therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man, and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubim and a flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life."

In the last chapter of Revelation, we read that John was shown "a pure river of water of life proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." The tree of life in the garden of Eden was undoubtedly a literal tree, but the one which John saw in vision must be taken symbolically. The river of water of life will therefore represent the blessings which the redeemed shall enjoy in the future state, those blessings which are wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit, and which are frequently represented under the image of water. (See Isa. 55:1; John 4:14; John 7:37–39; Rev. 22:17.) The tree of life will symbolize that eternal life which the Saviour has promised to those who believe on

Digitized by Google

Him. This eternal life will be the portion of all God's people. The bodies of those who sleep in Jesus shall come forth to a life that shall never end. The corruptible shall put on incorruption, and the mortal, immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. In that glorious state there shall be no more sin, no more curse, no more death. The righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. How earnestly should we seek to be of the number of those who shall inherit the kingdom of Christ. The promise is, "to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honor, and immortality," God will give "eternal life."

2. The promise to the church in Smyrna.

The Saviour says, "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." We are told what the second death is in Rev. 20: 14, 15: "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." Whether by this is meant a literal lake of fire, or whether it is a symbolic representation of the future punishment of the wicked, it clearly shows that the final end of those who disobey God and reject the Saviour will be awful and terrible. To be delivered then from such a death is an unspeakable blessing, and this the Saviour promises to all who overcome through faith in Him. Such shall not only escape the lake of fire, but shall dwell in the presence of God and the Lamb, and shall be holy and happy forever. There,

"All is tranquil and serene,
Calm and undisturbed repose;
There no cloud shall intervene,
There no angry tempest blows;
Every tear is wiped away,
Sighs no more shall heave the breast;
Night is lost in endless day,
Sorrow in eternal rest."

3. The promise to the church in Pergamos.

The Saviour says, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it."

There have been various opinions in regard to the meaning of the hidden manna and the white stone here mentioned. They are evidently symbols. Manna was the food which God gave to the Israelites in the wilderness. Some of it was laid up in the ark of the testimony, and thus it was hidden from the congregation. The manna was a type of Christ, who is the true bread that came down from heaven. The hidden manna may therefore represent the abundant blessings the Saviour will give to all His people in His future kingdom, when they, as His bride, shall be called to sit down at the marriage-supper of the Lamb. It is the spiritual food or sustenance of the life of the saints in the world to come, when they shall have been clothed with immortality, having glorified bodies like unto Christ's most glorious body. They shall be with Christ, enjoy His favor, be satisfied with His love, and inherit a kingdom which cannot be moved, and which will never end.

The white stone on which a new name is written is supposed by one writer to be "a badge of the new and peculiar relation to Christ to which the redeemed are to be exalted at their resurrection and acceptance."

It was customary among the ancients to give tokens or badges of friendship and alliance, on which some device was graven. A piece of wood, bone, ivory, or stone was taken and divided into equal parts, on which each of the parties wrote his own name, and then they exchanged these pieces with one another. These were carefully preserved, and by producing these when they travelled, it gave a mutual claim to the bearer, of kind acceptance and hospitality at each other's houses. (See Clarke's Commentary.)

Now Jesus writes His name, as it were, on His people's hearts. He gives them the earnest of the Spirit here, and He will admit them hereafter to all the enjoyments of the Paradise of God, and they shall be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

4. The promise to the church in Thyatira.

The Saviour says, "And he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall

Digitized by Google

rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my father. And I will give him the morning star."

To have power over the nations, and to rule them, refers to the future kingdom of Christ, when His redeemed ones will be made kings and priests unto God, and will reign with Christ forever.

They shall be advanced to great dignity and honor. When on earth, our Saviour told His apostles that when he should sit on the throne of His glory they also should sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Perhaps the term judging may mean ruling over. But who are the *nations* over which the saints shall rule? Are they not the nations who shall be living in the flesh during the millennial period? The word nations is believed to refer, in all places in the Scriptures, to persons living in the flesh, and never to the dead, or to those raised from the dead. If the saints are to be made kings, then there must be some over whom they are to rule. They may also bear some distinguished part in the judgment of the wicked. It is, however, certain that they will be exalted to great glory and power in the everlasting kingdom of Christ.

Another part of the promise is, "I will give him the morning star." In the 22d chapter of Revelation, Jesus is represented as saying, "I am the bright and morning star." As He promises to give to His people the morning star, it is the same as saying I will give myself to them. He will, therefore, give Himself as their Saviour, Redeemer, and King, and with Himself is included all the blessings He will bestow upon them. They shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world—they shall be delivered from all sin, sorrow, temptations, pain, and death, and rejoice forever with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Such is the promise made to those who overcome, in all ages and among all nations.

5. The promise to the church in Sardis.

The Saviour says, "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot his name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels."

In Rev. 19 : 7, 8, the church is described as the Lamb's wife, and it is said that to her was granted that "she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." The promise, therefore, to all who overcome is, that they shall stand justified before God, accepted by Him as His children, and be forever holy. Their righteousness is that which comes through the righteousness of Christ, and they shall be with Him, enjoying His presence and His love.

And when Jesus shall come again, they will come with Him, for John saw in vision the second advent of the Lord, and says, "The armies in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." (Rev. 19 : 14.)

The other part of the promise is, that their names shall not be blotted out of the Book of Life, but that Christ will confess them before His Father and His angels. When the judgment-throne is set, and the books opened, their names will be found recorded in it, and Jesus will own them as His, as His Bride, as His Church. Then He will present them to Himself, "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but they shall be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5 : 27.) Jesus has said, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 10 : 33.) O, glorious day when all the elect of God shall possess the kingdom, and rejoice in the presence of God and the Lamb. It is said they shall walk with Christ, they shall be with Him, be participants in His glory, and forever dwell in His presence.

Forever with the Lord,
To walk with Him in white,
Forever to enjoy His love,
And be the Lamb's delight.

6. The promise to the church in Philadelphia.

The Saviour says, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name

Digitized by Google

of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name."

In the Epistle to the Galatians, Paul says James, Peter, and John seemed to be pillars in the church at Jerusalem. They appeared as the chief men, the most faithful upholders of the Gospel and supporters of the church. To be made pillars in the temple of God is to be advanced to the highest dignity in the future church triumphant. The faithful disciples of Christ shall be everlasting pillars, such as shall never decay or fall. Thus has one written, "The gates of Thebes, the Pyramids of Egypt, the columns of the Parthenon, shall all moulder and decay, but those pillars that Christ is building and erecting through successive years to be the corridors of the temple of our God, shall borrow immortality from decay, splendor from surrounding darkness, and when centuries of millennia have rolled their career, they shall only shine more beautifully in the lustre and the light of that grace which placed them there, monuments and pillars in the temple of our God."

"They shall go no more out." They shall be permanent—their glory and honor, their dignity and power shall endure forever.

A further part of the promise is, "I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new name."

To write upon the faithful Christian the name of God would seem to refer to the practice of writing upon the pillars or columns of an edifice the name of the persons by whom they were presented, or the name of those to whom they were dedicated. The temple of Diana at Ephesus had one hundred and twenty-seven pillars, which were presented by as many kings. Perhaps their names may have been inscribed on them. To write the name of God on Christians would, therefore, imply that God owned them as His adopted sons, persons consecrated to His service. Thus, the priests used to have written on their mitres "Holiness to the Lord." To write the name of the city of God on them would imply that they were owned and acknowledged as members of the Church of God, His chosen ones, who shall be finally gathered into the kingdom of Christ. The New Jerusalem is evidently a symbol of the Church of God, as we read in the 21st chapter of Revelation that one of the seven angels which held the seven vials said to John, Come hither, and I will *show thee* the Bride, the Lamb's wife, *i e.*, the Church of Christ. And he carried John in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and *showed him* the Holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God. (See Rev. 21 : 9, 10.) The city of the New Jerusalem was therefore shown John as a symbol of the church, descending from heaven to take possession of the kingdom promised by the Saviour. What the new name of Christ signifies, who can say? In the 19th chapter, we read of heaven being opened, and Christ coming out therefrom. There it is said He had on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, "King of kings and Lord of lords," and also that His name is called "The Word of God." Such a name written on the saints would show that they were owned as the partakers of His glory and kingdom, that they received Jesus as their King to rule over them, and that they should themselves be made kings and priests unto God and His Father.

7. The promise to the church in Laodicea.

Our Saviour says, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcome, and am set down with my Father in His throne."

Jesus, when on earth, endured the severest trials. He was derided and persecuted. He was tempted of Satan; He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. But He overcame—He triumphed over the powers of hell. It is true He was condemned and put to death, but He arose again, and ascended to heaven, and sat down on the throne of His Father. He promises to exalt all who overcome through faith in Him to the highest dignity and honor. He promises that they shall sit down with Him in His throne, even as He overcame and sat down with His Father on His throne. What a glorious promise is this! They shall be made

Digitized by Google

the recipients of power and glory. They shall be kings and priests unto God.

It is well to observe here that two thrones are mentioned. The Father's throne is in heaven, and Jesus Christ has sat down there. But He speaks of *His* throne, and that is the throne of David, which the angel Gabriel told Mary should be given Him. The angel said to her, "Thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1 : 31–33.) As the Lord Jesus has never yet received the throne of David, and has never reigned as king over the house of Jacob, His receiving that throne must be in the future. This will be accomplished when He shall come again without sin, with salvation. He will then reign over the restored Israelites, and will also be king over all the earth. Then the promise to the overcomers will be fulfilled, and they shall be great and glorious as participants of His kingdom, for "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." (Daniel 7 : 27.)

Thus, to these seven churches of Asia were these exceeding great and precious promises made; but we have reason to believe that they are not confined to them, but are applicable to all who by faith in Christ overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. All such will be partakers of the various blessings promised—all such will be advanced to the same glory and honor. Eternal life and endless enjoyment shall be theirs. Delivered from sin and all its consequences, Jesus will give them the hidden manna and the white stone, acknowledging them as His elect. They shall stand justified and accepted before God—their names shall be found recorded in the book of life, and Jesus will receive them to Himself in the day of His coming, and they shall be forever with the Lord. May we by faith in Jesus be with that holy company.

S. S. W.

Selections.

THAT BLESSED HOPE.

"By grace are ye saved." And the same grace by which we are "called," and "justified," and "established," and helped "in time of need," not only brings salvation to mankind, but also teaches them "that denying ungodly and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, and righteously, and godlily in this present world, looking for that Blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

The faith, the hope, and the conduct of the followers of Christ are thus brought under the direction of the saving grace of God. The world's ungodliness and lusts are to be discarded; and the world's hopes are as vain as its lusts are vile. The hopes of joy in earth's vanities, of peace in paths of sin, and of golden days in a world that reeks with guilt and tramples scornfully on the Saviour's blood, are doomed to sad and terrible disappointments. Such hopes cannot abide the trials of life, the agonies of death, and the stern realities of judgment and eternity.

For those who would build upon a sure foundation, "a better hope" is prepared, "which hope we have as an anchor to the soul," entering "into that within the vail." And those "who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them," have obtained "through patience and comfort of the Scriptures," "a lively hope," a sure and steadfast hope, a "good hope through grace," a "hope of sal-

Digitized by Google

vation," a "hope of eternal life," a "hope of the glory of God," a hope of the "resurrection of the dead," a hope of being like Jesus and seeing Him "as He is," a blessed hope of the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;—a hope that "maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost."

Around this grand central fact, the glorious appearing of the Saviour, all other hopes revolve and culminate. "The hope of Salvation" reaches onward till He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation, to "them that look for Him." "The hope of eternal life" points to that judgment seat whence the cursed shall depart to everlasting fire, "the righteous go away into life eternal." The "hope of the glory of God" has respect to that day when Christ who is our life shall appear, and we also shall "appear with Him in glory." "The hope and resurrection of the dead" can only find its fruition when "all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth." The hope of being like Christ, most certainly is deferred until He shall appear in his own glorified humanity, and "we shall see him as he is;" and the Blessed Hope of that appearing comprehends and binds together all these grand anticipations of the universal church of God.

It is to that day, "the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto him," that the saving grace of God has taught our souls to look, as the day when "the Kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ" shall be made manifest; when the rule of Satan shall be broken, and the serpent's head be crushed; when wars and strifes and turmoils shall be ended; and when the Almighty Christ, in the perfection of his humanity, and the glory of his Deity, shall be revealed, exalted, and adored forevermore.

And to the waiting Church of God, this is a "blessed hope," a glad and sure expectation, for which they wait more than they that watch for the morning; for which they lift their hearts in universal prayer.

> "And chide the tardy seals which yet detain
> Thy Lion, Judah, from his destined reign."

And this waiting "for the Son of God from heaven," this looking for Him "the second time," this "looking for that blessed hope," is not the result of peculiar views, or special instructions, nor of private interpretations of prophecies, visions, symbols, and periods; it is the simple lesson taught by the saving *grace of God;* and he who knows the grace of God in truth is instructed by it to live, "looking for that blessed hope." Grace teaches him to love Him by whom grace and truth came to a fallen race; and loving Him on earth and in heaven, it also teaches him to "gird up the loins of his mind, and be sober and hope unto the end, for the grace that shall be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

To the child of grace Jesus is "full of grace and truth;" and his presence is the one object of loftiest and purest desire. And in his promise, "If I go and prepare a place for you I will come again," and, "Surely I come quickly," a gracious soul finds ample warrant for looking for this blessed hope.—*The Christian.*

Editorial.

FOR AND WITH.

When Christ comes, He will bring His Church *with Him.* He is not in the earth now; some of His elect are. Therefore, His people must have been taken away from the earth before He comes. All of them—living or dead; for it is written: "My God shall come, and *all* the saints with Thee." But in order to come *with* them, He must first come *for* them, or "take" them. This is a point, the right apprehension of which is of vital importance for the understanding of the sacred Word. And it is a point respecting which, we think, there is still thick darkness in the Church at large. It is a truth that is sadly misapprehended. Yet it is a truth which throws a flood of light on a matter which has bewildered many honest minds.

Digitized by Google

When contemplating it, we are once more reminded of the old saying: "*Distinguite tempora, et concordabuntur Scripturæ;*" *i. e.* "Arrange the predicted events in their proper *order*, and the Scriptures will harmonize."

A church-member of good standing once said: "The Lord cannot be so near as Brother ——— thinks; because the sun has not yet been darkened, nor have the stars fallen from heaven." This remark expresses a very common opinion; and there is a good deal in it that looks natural, sensible, and scriptural. From one standpoint it is perfectly true; from another, entirely erroneous.

Another person, a bishop, once said: "If you preach so much about the coming of the Lord you will frighten the people." There is truth in this remark, also. But in the case of believers it ought not to be so, and they are very greatly to blame for feeling so, and for not knowing better. In their case, this fear arises mainly from a misapprehension on their side; though in part, too, no doubt, from a lack of consecration. Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. But believers are exhorted to *comfort* one another with these words. If they are still "frightened," it is because they misapprehend their position. *They* ought not to be frightened; even if many nominal church-members are.

Alas! how has modern heresy blinded the minds of people, and perverted the simple faith held by the primitive Church, without exception. And all through an unnatural artificial gloss put upon the Scriptures: all through a wicked "spiritualizing" system that wrests and explains away the clearest prophecies.

Frightened! What, frightened at going to be with the Lord! Frightened at deliverance from all the trials, temptations, and sorrows of their present condition! Frightened at going to heaven! Frightened at final and full redemption!

They would reply: "It is not at *these* things that we are frightened, but at the *terrors* of the *judgment*, that will precede them."

And from this reply it is evident how they misunderstand the facts; since, *for them* there is no such judgment at all, as they suppose; nor any punitive infliction whatsoever decreed; nor indeed any grand assize at all, lasting just twenty-four hours. This belief in which they have grown up, and this dread of the day of the Lord, are part of the "spiritualizing" fog whereby Satan has so greatly concealed the truth. It is true that we who believe must likewise be *manifested* before the judgment-seat of Christ, which is a solemn thought; yet it is not less a delightful one, and in *no* case is there a judgment like that of the wicked, unto condemnation and wrath.

The judgment in the day of the Lord is a continuous series of acts extending over a thousand years, and winding up with the scene at the great white throne. And for the faithful and ready among the saints there is entire immunity,—immunity even from those opening earthly troubles that will constitute "the great tribulation." For such saints,—and the privilege is open to all,—the coming of the Lord is synonymous with instant and complete deliverance, and translation to glory. And it is when believers understand this that they look forward to the advent with longing desire. With the plain statements of the Scriptures before us, all of us *should* understand it.

"*Comfort* one another with these words." That is the Divine dictum. This is the privilege, and this the proper position of all true Christians. The Church has lost this comfort, as far as any enjoyment of it is concerned. She has let go the primitive sound doctrine; and, through the machinations of the enemy, has actually got to be *afraid* of the day of the Lord! When she shall wake up, shortly, she will find her comfort again where it was in the beginning. And she will find that the *parousia* is very different from the *epiphany*. She will find that the Lord Jesus comes *for* His people, first comes to fetch them all to Himself, before He brings them with Him when publicly He comes to destroy the wicked. And even if, through unwatchfulness and unreadiness, some of the Lord's people should, before their translation from the earth, have to pass under the rod, it ought to be well understood that this rod will be sent in mercy for their benefit, and that in no case is it possible for

Digitized by Google

them to come into the same category with the wicked. Of old, already, when the Lord had chastened the unfaithful children of Israel by permitting them to participate in the opening plagues which He sent upon the Egyptians, He soon made a sharp distinction between them and their oppressors. Together, they all triumphed with Him, at the sea, over Pharaoh. And thus it will be again, on a far more extensive scale. The whole Church, however chastened at first in some of the members, will participate with the Lord in the overthrow of His enemies, and before that time He will have gathered all His people to Himself.

But there is also a specially blessed prospect held out to those who are ever on the lookout for Him, and always praying; viz., that they shall be accounted worthy to escape all the sorrows that are coming.

But in these last days there are, alas, as was predicted, too few who live in the element of the unseen; too few whose faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Too few who live in the element of Christ's spiritual presence, His plans, and His service. Many disciples who, though not disloyal, are unable to say, "To me to live is Christ." Of those who are called by His name some have no taste for it, and some do not comprehend it aright. Men now live for earthly things—for business, for present profit, for pleasure. But those who increasingly comprehend the true position of affairs, at length become, so to speak, enthusiastic for Christ. And if they advance far enough, they may, eventually, even say: "I am crucified with Christ." There is, in this, no danger of being thrown off the mental balance: there are plenty of counterpoises supplied. (See 1 Cor. 4, and 2 Cor. 11.)

The truth is, that the Lord Jesus gathers to Himself all His elect, whether living or dead, before He manifests Himself in flaming fire to the world. This gathering process, however, occupies some time. It has successive stages; and meantime the opening judgments and terrors of the day of the Lord are poured out upon the world. There are some saints, however, who shall altogether escape them, being caught up to meet the Lord in the air before they commence. And if all the Lord's people are not thus exempted, the fault lies entirely with themselves, because they are not in an attitude of expectancy, and have not yet the bridal spirit. If the Lord Jesus, at his *parousia* in the air, found the whole Church in a proper frame of bridal expectancy, doubtlessly not a single believer would be left on earth, to encounter the terrific opening events of the day of the Lord.

The "presence" of the Lord in the air, and the rapture, or rather translation into His presence of the ready saints, is the first of all the long list of miraculous events that are predicted. And this is the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Yet the elect who have no part in it will not perish with the world, but will be saved out of it, as Lot was out of Sodom. Not a hair of their heads can perish: the very hairs of their heads are all numbered. Each individual member is necessary to the completion of the body of Christ; and not until that body is gathered to Him in its entirety will His *epiphany* to the world take place.

Now are many who do not yet apprehend these truths in their proper relations. They do not understand the difference between Christ's coming for His church and with His church. Perhaps they do not clearly see that such a difference exists. Confusion prevails in their minds. They look first for the coming judgments, because they perceive that some of the saints will be in them. They think that the Lord will be revealed from heaven before His people are delivered. Hence there is a hindrance to their minds, which prevents them from looking for Him at any moment. They are expecting something else to transpire first.

Consequently they are still entangled in doubts and uncertainty. Therefore, the love of many good people who are somewhat enlightened is still so cold. Therefore they are still so reluctant to take risks, or to incur the danger of losing their reputation in the church and their popularity in the world. They still view the matter too speculatively. The case is not yet urgent with them. Will they wait for the terrors of the coming tribula-

Digitized by Google

tion to bring them to the scriptural standard of expectancy? When *that* once begins, the case will be urgent indeed.

Meantime, they are disposed to regard much that is published in these pages respecting the Lord's advent, as, at best, learned, or philosophical, or prophetic speculation. Yet, even in that case, what is written in the Sacred Scriptures remains. And that is quite sufficient to prove our positions.

The truth remains, that only those shall escape all these things that shall come to pass, and shall stand (at that time) before the Son of Man, who shall be accounted worthy. And this worthiness consists in being on the watch, and in praying always. There are peculiar honors reserved for the wise and faithful. This truth is very distasteful. Many oppose it bitterly. Perhaps the secret reason, of which they are themselves unconscious, is, lest they should be rendered uneasy by the discovery that their present attitude is improper and unscriptural, and their position, in consequence, insecure.

His unready elect, likewise, the Lord Jesus will fetch out of the world, before He is manifested to it; for when our God comes, He brings *all* His holy ones with *Him*: but these unready ones will then have been weaned from the world. They will have learned to long for the *Bridegroom*, during the opening terrors of the day of the Lord; terrors which, as the Revelation shows us, intensify, until they culminate at the glorious epiphany of the King of kings at the battle of the great day of God Almighty.

But, before the day of days, all the saints without exception, living or dead, will have been gathered to the presence of Jesus. He will bring them *with* Him. As in the going forth from Egypt, not a hoof will have been left behind. For the Lord loveth His saints. Precious in His sight is their death. They are His chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people. A glorious truth; which many of them, through a better knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue, will soon learn to appreciate better than they do now. And blessed are those who now already get a good view of its proportions.

The coming of the Lord—in Greek His *παρουσια*—His presence in our aerial regions—remains what the Scriptures make it; it remains the comfort of his people. Any present dulness on their part cannot make the word of God of none effect.

We repeat: when Jesus comes in the clouds of heaven, with flaming fire, not a single Christian will be left on earth. This result is an inevitable concomitant of the fact that the Lord will bring His people with Him, when He comes. Hence it is that the Holy Scriptures everywhere exhort us by the parousia of our Lord, and by *our gathering together unto Him*,* and not by His epiphany.

This great subject then, is shown by the Scriptures to be of vital interest to the Church, and the right understanding of it, and the right use of it, matters of the highest importance. But who, at this time, ever hears this gathering made a subject of pulpit addresses, much less a prominent theme. And if we ask, why is it so, the answer is, partly because it is not relished, and partly because it is not understood. Yet it is to this very gathering together unto the Lord that we are exhorted to look. Not to His public revelation, but to His secret presence in our celestial spaces.

This distinction, as we have said on former occasions, though not apparent in our English version, is exceedingly plain in the Greek, where two different words are used, both of which are translated coming. One is *παρουσια*, presence; and the other is *ἐπιφανεια*, epiphany. The distinction between them is strikingly plain in 2 Thess. 2: 8; where we read, in the Greek, of the epiphany of His *parousia*; that is, the bright and public, and terrific manifestation to the world of His presence: and thus the two are plainly contrasted.

No wonder the Church, with its strange and modern notion of a simultaneous general judgment of twenty four hours, cannot look forward to that day with pleasurable emotions. For it is written: "Who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand, when

* In the Greek of this phrase, the preposition *επι* is twice used.

Digitized by Google

He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap. For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven."

Courage, ye fearful saints! We shall meet the Lord in the air. *There* we shall stand before our Head and Saviour. Take courage! The terrors of the day of the epiphany do not concern you, except as you shall have part in its judicial administrations. Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels? Know ye not that it is written that the saints shall judge the cosmos—the whole creation, and not this earth only? Not without deliberate and specific attention and meaning is it written: "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked." Courage, ye fearful saints! We shall meet the Lord in the air. *There* we shall stand before our Head and Saviour. *There* we shall receive a reward for the deeds done in the body—unless, indeed, those works should be burnt up. But even that fearful loss will not touch our safety. What! are we to be put on trial as to our acceptance in the Beloved? Preposterous thought! What? is it not *yet* settled that the precious blood of the atoning sacrifice is all sufficient? And whosoever will, may come with us; and still take of the water of life freely.

Oh, ye precious blood-bought ones, we are none of us more than half awake! And some of us carry our title-deeds about with us, and cannot read them. So much the more pity. They are there, though; perfectly safe from all the claims of the law. Nothing hangs in doubt. We are already passed from death unto life. We now already have, each one of us, eternal life; just as much as we shall ever have, though not yet developed. Everywhere God's Word takes this for granted. If it is not so, then of what use is our religion? And if this is not the prevalent feeling in the churches at present, it will have to be changed. Laodiceans, indeed, do not know nor feel this.

We shall *all* come with our Lord; not one shall be wanting in the day of His public appearing. But yet it is true that if we are not watching for Jesus and praying always, we shall, at the opening of the day of the Lord, be left behind at first, to endure a measure of its troubles. Yea, *some* will even go through the horrors of the Great Tribulation before they can be weaned from cleaving too much to this world. For thus it is written.

Antichrist will be revealed. The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood. The stars will fall from heaven. Satan will give his seat to the beast, with great authority. There will be lying signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if it were possible, even the very elect. God himself shall send strong delusion, so that men shall believe a lie: just as, of old, He hardened Pharaoh's heart. All this, and much more, that is of the utmost importance, is plainly revealed; and it is our privilege and our duty to pay the utmost attention to it. But the Church is nowhere told to look for these things before the Lord comes *for* her. On the contrary, for *her* he comes as a thief. If any one is left to endure these horrors, it will simply be owing to his own unreadiness; not because there was no warning call to escape them; not because the way of escape was not open; but in spite of the natural privilege of the church; and because that privilege was not laid hold of. Therefore, there never was anything put by the Spirit, as a matter of church expectancy, before the coming of the Lord Jesus.

And this explains, with entire satisfactoriness, how, from the earliest times, believers were exhorted always to be looking for their Lord from heaven. For *them*, in their proper frame of mind, this is always the first event. Not His public appearing; but His *parousia*, or presence in the air; during which, sooner or later, the church in its entirety, will, at various stages, be gathered to Him.

It is true that many will experience the dichotomy; that many will even have to pass through the great tribulation; but only *because* such a purification will be found necessary for them, on account of their being too much like Lot's wife. Hence the warning which fell from the Master's lips, and which sounds strangely to many, to remember her.

Judgment always begins at the house of the Lord. There will be a judgment in the taking

Digitized by Google

of the 'eagles,' because the dichotomy will be simultaneous with it; there will be judgment for believers in the successive trials which the opening of the day of the Lord will usher in. But it ought not the less to be emphatically affirmed and ever kept in mind, that not until the Lord has gathered in the weakest, and the last, of His saints, will He be revealed in the sight of the world. Then, only will He publicly come; then, only, will His effulgent majesty burst upon the godless world. Then only God shall come from Teman, and the Holy One shall shine forth from Mt. Paran: when the Lord shall come from the Mount of Assembly, the gathering place at Sinai; when He shall rise up from Seir, with dyed garments from Edom; and when His feet shall touch the earth again where He ascended, even on the Mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem on the east.

What then? Are the signs of the times of no importance to the church? Far from it: they are of great importance. Jesus said: "Can ye not discern the signs of the times?" And again: "When ye shall see these things *begin* to come to pass, then lift up your heads, for your redemption"—the price of it was paid long ago—"draweth nigh."

And when once that period of the day of the Lord which embraces Antichrist's 3½ years shall have begun, the saints, if in the fierceness of the judgment fires they have time to consider it, will be able to trace their exact position, as a mariner takes observations to determine his place at sea: for even the exact number of days his rule will continue is, for their comfort, revealed, so that, while they are still left alive, they will be able to count them on their fingers. But it is very evident that the image of Antichrist will not be set up till the day of the Lord has continued for some time. And it is very doubtful whether a single individual of the Lord's people, except those who shall have fled into the wilderness, will be left alive during it: for it is written of the second beast in Rev. 11 that he had power to cause that "as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed;" and again, in Rev. 20, "I saw the souls of them which were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their forehead, nor in their hands."

We will not here dwell upon these signs as we now see them. Most remarkable have been the events of the year 1870. Every thinking mind in the church, without exception, is pondering them, and wondering whereunto they will grow. But the end is not yet. Most persons still regard them as the convulsions, or the beginning of the convulsions, that shall finally clear away the superstitions of the past ages. This is a very grave mistake: it tends to postpone in their minds the period of the Lord's coming. As for the papacy, it seems probable from Rev. 17 that it will recover itself for one more expiring effort—brief and fearful—its greatest and its last.

But we did not take up our pen to speak in this article of the signs of the times. We wished to point out the vast difference between the public revelation of the Lord *with* His saints, and their previous gathering together to Him. There is misapprehension on this point, and hence the perplexity which many honest inquirers feel. This mixing up of two distinct events is a mistake, a serious error, a misapprehension on a vital point. For if we are to look for the signs in the sky, and for the convulsions of nature, *before* the Lord calls His people, then certainly, however near His coming may be, it cannot happen *any day;* for the occurrence of the predicted judgments and fearful sights must necessarily extend over some time. But if the translation of the (eagle) saints is the *first* indication of the opening day of the Lord, then indeed, that day may come *as a snare* on all them that dwell on the face of the whole habitable earth; and the consistency of the prophetic word is triumphantly vindicated. E. E. R.

THE Lord will come in person to this earth: his risen elect will reign here with him. This is my firm persuasion, and not mine alone, but that of multitudes of Christ's waiting people, as it was that of his primitive apostolic Church, before controversy blinded the eyes of the fathers to the light of prophecy.—*Alford.*

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. IX. MAY, 1871. No. 5.

Special Contributions.

PREACHING THE ADVENT.

Let me say a few words on a subject nearly related to the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Those who preach that this event may be very nigh at hand,—that it may happen in our day,—and, indeed, on any day,—are, as you know, ridiculed and denounced, as dreaming fanatics, vain pretenders, and unnecessary alarmists. It is not a matter of surprise that the openly profane and unbelieving should laugh at and ridicule such preaching; nothing better could be expected of them; but that any who call themselves Christians,—and good, pious Christians,—should be offended at it is certainly most astonishing. Though such preaching has been but too seldom heard in these latter days, it ought not to be strange or unfamiliar to Christian minds. It was begun by Christ himself. All the apostles, and all the early Christians looked for, and anxiously desired, the second coming of the Son of Man in their day; and it is the earnest expectation of His church, and of the whole creation, rational and irrational, even to the present hour. "Be ye ready," says our Lord, "for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." He spake to men *then living*, and warned *them* that the event might come to pass in *their* time, on any day, and at any hour of their lives. Scoffers might say that Christ and His apostles and all those who, from their times to the present, so taught and believed were mistaken and deceived: as eighteen centuries have elapsed since then, and the Son of Man has not yet come. But there is no force in that objection. Neither Christ, nor any of the inspired writers, fixed a *specific time* for His coming; nor indeed could they, for "of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only;" and those who have pretended, or may hereafter pretend, to name the day or the hour, make themselves wise above what is written, even wiser, in this matter, than the Son of God himself, and equal in wisdom to the Great God and Father of our Lord. When considering of the coming of Christ, we should always bear in mind that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." What men call time,—and the divisions of time (past, present, and future), together with boundless eternity,—is, before Him, one perpetual *now*; and whether the Son of Man shall come in our day, or thousands of years afterwards, the time of His coming must be ever present in the eye of the heavenly Father. And even to our minds the period that may elapse before His coming, however protracted it may be, must be considered short indeed when compared with the boundless duration of eternity. None, therefore, should say, "The Lord delayeth His coming,"—or, that we need not expect to see His sign in the heavens for thousands of years yet to come.

We do not, and cannot, know anything certain of the day or the hour; *and for that very reason* we should not be offended at those that admonish us, in our Lord's own words, "*be ye ready.*" That He will come,—and unexpect-

Digitized by Google

edly,—is most certain; and blessed is he who, when He cometh, shall be found ready.

An eminent English divine (now deceased), a high dignitary in the established church, writing on this subject, says: "The youth of the present generation (it is a solemn thought), may live to see the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven." "But there is one consideration which every one should cherish in the depth of the heart,—namely, that whether the 'great day of the wrath of the Lamb' be near at hand, or afar off, the hour of death to each individual will be, to all intents and purposes, a day of His coming,—and, 'after death, the judgment.'"

We are all taught to say, "Thy kingdom come;" but I greatly doubt if we all understand the petition alike. Some understand the words as a prayer for the speedy return of Christ, and the establishment of His kingdom on earth, where He shall reign with His saints a thousand years; and very many, I fear, have never formed any definite idea of their meaning.

How often do we hear a person exclaim, with a sigh of seemingly delightful anticipation, "O, I wish I was in heaven!" when, perhaps, we may have reason to fear that the person so speaking has made but little preparation for the enjoyment of the pleasures of heaven. Should we say to such a one, "If you really desire to be taken to heaven without delay, pray for the immediate appearance of the Son of Man, that so you may (if found ready), be caught up to meet Him, and be with Him forever;—for, where He is, is heaven;"—I venture to predict that *that* prayer would not be offered. Nay, even many who consider themselves, and are esteemed by others, good and pious Christians, and meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, shrink from the thought of the coming of the Lord in their day.

Why is this? Is it not that people are accustomed to associate the event of the coming of the Son of Man with that of their own death; and to think that, if living, they must necessarily die when he appears in the clouds? I believe it is so. The fear of death is so rooted and grounded in the heart of man that nothing short of a complete regeneration,—a being made "a new creature," and a full partaker of the life that is in Christ, can eradicate and destroy it. The apostle's mind was so completely transformed into the image of Christ that, so far from fearing to die, he longed to depart and be with Him; declaring that it was "far better" than to continue to live in this world. And thousands of Christians in all ages have witnessed in their last moments that death had no terrors for them, as, through Christ, they had overcome the fear of death and of the grave.

I understand the apostle to put into the mouth of every true Christian made "perfect in holiness" (if I may be allowed to use a word so offensive to the ears of many), the words in 1 Cor. 15:55, "O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

If "the sting of death is sin," and if sin be rooted out and destroyed, I cannot understand how a Christian, in that case, can entertain any fear of death, or of the grave.

But there are, and will be, "fearful saints," who may never be able to fully overcome these terrors. Should we not say to such ones: "Do not be alarmed at the announcement of the probable coming of the Son of Man in your day,—as if His coming would necessarily be the occasion of your death;—on the contrary, if you dread the pains of death pray most fervently that He may come while you are yet living; for then, if ye be 'ready,' *ye shall not die*, but be changed, 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,' without being conscious of fear or pain. Your mortal shall put on immortality, and ye shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the clouds, and be with Him forever." J. J.

PERPETUITY OF THE EARTH.

SHALL this world be rolled up and laid aside? Does a speedy and eternal end await our globe? When something more than one thousand years shall have passed away, will the earth cease to be, and be as though it had not been?

It is quite poetic to assign to all sublunary

Digitized by Google

things, man alone excepted, a speedy and an eternal end—to have them pass away "as the baseless fabric of a vision." Some would annihilate the earth—burn it into nothing. A minister recently informed us, "This world shall be rolled up and laid aside;" and then went on to say, that such a fate awaits the planets of our system. It was preaching, but was it true?

If no atonement had been made, such a thing might have been true of the earth. If sin has entered other worlds, and no form of atonement has been made for them, it may be true of them, or true in part. Or if the atonement had not extended as far as Adam's sin, then things irrational, having fallen under the curse, might remain under it—never be delivered from it. But if the atonement extends as far as Adam's sin, then all things earthly, except such as have the power of faith and repentance, and have remained unrepentant—all things except such as reject or neglect the atonement, will be more or less benefited by it. All irrational things which have suffered in consequence of Adam's sin, will be restored in consequence of Christ's death. The inference seems to be irresistible, that if the atonement is not defective, the earth, in consequence of it, will be delivered from the curse, and restored to its primal state.

If sin had not entered our world, certainly no one believes that utter destruction would have awaited the earth. If man had not fallen, perhaps, all believe he would eventually have become immortal, and the earth would have been eternal. But if the effects of the obedience and death of the second Adam extends as far as the disobedience of the first Adam, then why will not the immortality of all men who do not reject the atonement, and the eternity of the earth be secured? That such will be the case, the Bible assures us. When this earth shall be a new earth, "there shall be no more curse," or no more a curse. (Rev. 22:3.)

Astronomy informs us that the earth, with our whole solar system, is a part, a very small part of a great sidereal system. It also informs us that our solar system will be about 18,200,000 years performing a single revolution in its great astral orbit. Is it probable that our guiltless earth, on which a most glorious atonement has been made, and our guiltless solar system, on many of whose orbs sin has not appeared, shall be annihilated many millions of years before they shall have performed a single revolution in their astral orbit?—that they shall become "as the baseless fabric of a vision," comparatively, almost as soon as they have been set in motion?—that a great jar shall be made in our sidereal system almost as soon as it has been formed, and made notwithstanding the glorious atonement?

It is estimated that our solar system has only passed over the one three-thousandth part of its orbit since the creation, and another thousand years will do very little more toward completing its mighty revolution. Shall our earth, which has been made conspicuous by the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh upon it, and by, perhaps, the greatest display of the love, mercy, and the other attributes of God, which any world has ever witnessed, so soon cease to exist? Everything seems positively to answer, No. Such a wonderful revolution certainly seems to bespeak for earth a protracted, if not an endless period in the future.

Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, and not his own. (1 John 3:8.) We have no possible warrant to believe Christ will destroy the earth. Will he permit Satan to do it?

But does the Bible speak positively on this subject? We are told, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning [Gr. in beginnings] hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest; they shall wax old, as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and *they shall be changed:* but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." (Heb. 1 : 10–12.) This is quoted from Ps. 102:25, 26. "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; and *as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed.*" From these and other passages we learn that

Digitized by Google

the perishing of the earth, is merely its present form, that it shall only wax old like a garment, and like a vesture be changed, not annihilated. Change does not imply utter destruction. The earth shall be made another; changed as the redeemed shall be. It will be a change that will fit it for their abode. (Rev. 5 : 9, 10.) Peter, speaking of the great conflagration which awaits the earth, when "the heavens being on fire," that is, the atmospheric heavens, "shall be dissolved," and the very "elements shall melt with fervent heat," adds, "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Pet. 3 : 13; Isa. 65 : 17; 66 : 22, et al.) The most plain and positive account of the new earth is in Rev. 21st and 22d chapters.

This earth is positively promised to the redeemed and glorified as their abode. (Ps. 37 : 9, 11, 22, 29, 34; Isa. 57 : 13; Prov. 2 : 21; Matt. 5 : 5.) I might refer to a great many other passages which cannot possibly be explained on any other supposition. The trying to explain away their plain, positive import, is one thing which has made many inexplicable mysteries in the Bible.

It is on the earth, and not in some distant, unknown and unsubstantial world, the glorified are to reign. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and *we shall reign on the earth.*" (Rev. 5 : 9, 10.) How any one can make "*on the earth*" mean in some other world, is a mystery. Is it not doing violence to the plain import of God's word? Is it not taking a liberty with God's book, which any one of us would be unwilling to have taken with ours? Is it not enough to make us tremble to think of such liberties being taken with a positive "thus saith the Lord?" Many other passages of the same import might be quoted.

The earth is spoken of as stable and abiding. "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever." (Eccl. 1 : 4.) "Who laid the foundations of the earth, that should not be removed forever." (Ps. 119 : 90.) "For as the new heavens, and the new earth, which I will make, *shall remain* before me, saith the Lord." (Isa. 66 : 22, 23.) Many other passages might be quoted, but I must forbear. There are great, sublime, grand figures which would seem to imply the utter destruction of the earth, but scarcely any of them are as strong as that used in 2d Peter, where we are assured of new heavens and a new earth. Peter compares the destruction by fire to that by the flood. At the flood the earth was neither annihilated nor laid aside.

Isa. 34 : 4, 5, would seem to imply the utter dissolution of the heavens and the earth, yet from the context it is evident that it cannot even refer to the conflagration—that it will precede the millennium. So with many other passages. J. B.

SPIRITUALIZING THE PROPHECIES.

One of the principal hindrances to a right appreciation of the proper Christian hope, and to the cultivation of a spirit of expectant preparation for the impending coming of our blessed Lord, is the prevalent and injurious system of imposing upon the divine word a sense not contained in its literal terms, and turning of it into applications to suit preconceived notions. For example, when the angel said to Mary, of her son Jesus: "The Lord shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end;" modern teaching says it means a reign in the hearts of Christians, and that the promise is fulfilled and exhausted in Christ's present administrations in and over all believers. This men call taking the spirit of prophecy, leaving the letter drop as unworthy of their attention.

Indeed, this "Whitbyan spiritualizing," though to many unknown by that name, has become almost universal in the modern churches. It is the potent instrument which Satan has employed for confusing minds, for obscuring prophecy, for robbing the Church

Digitized by Google

of her hope. Hence it is that people now say that "Israel," and "Zion," in prophecy, mean the Church!* "Arise, shine," (Is. 60)—that means the Christian Church; and "Jerusalem the throne of the Lord" means . . . the conversion of the world. Can folly go further? Can anything be more audacious? We had almost said blasphemous. What a perversion of the word of the Almighty! What a putting of darkness for light, and of bitter for sweet! But such is the mournful fact; such is the power of public opinion; such is the force of prejudice, and the rut of mental habit.

We, too, grew up with the idea that this spiritualizing interpretation of prophecy was one of the points that are settled. We held it ignorantly in unbelief. No one had pointed out to us its folly—we thought it was for the glory of God. And yet we had frequent misgivings; for the strong language of the prophets seemed to clash strangely with it. But we held it, simply because we had not sufficiently looked at Scripture in all its bearings.

And this is the case with very many well-meaning people still; though now, through the multiplication of so-called millenarian publications, there is hardly any excuse—at least for ministers.

We "spiritualized" prophecy, because we never attempted to harmonize it. We took on trust the statements made *ex cathedra*, by commentators, by the pulpit, and by the press. But as soon as we examined for ourselves we found that this popular explaining away of plain prophetical Scriptures yielded, at the first biblical strain to which it was subjected. No sooner did we turn to Isaiah 2, and compare what the other Scriptures say respecting the day of the Lord, and the occurrences in it—(see the "Millennial Concordance" advertised on the cover of this periodical)—thau this Whitbyan theory was, for us, broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor; the wind carried it away, and no place was found for it.

The thousand years of (universal) peace and righteousness on the earth, we did, indeed, find predicted; but not until *after* the coming of the Lord; not until *after* His personal presence on earth; not until *after* the setting up of His visible kingdom, beginning at Jerusalem. We found that the wheat and tares *grow together*, until the harvest. We found that evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse. We found that the Lawless One—(*ανομος*; "that Wicked One," in our version)—is not destroyed except by the brightness of the Lord's epiphany. We found that when the Saviour comes, it will be a question whether He will find "*the*" faith (*την πιστιν*) on the earth. We received a rude mental shock. Our ideas on this point underwent a revolution.

At first, indeed, the taste was bitter: we regarded the probable consequences with some dread; but soon (and ever since), it was sweet as honey. With redoubled fervor we have embraced the feet of the Crucified One; and have not rejected the inevitable and inseparable cross; for thus it must needs be at present, in order to fulfil all righteousness; and in order that, as in the case of the Master, whose steps all believers are privileged to follow, there might be wrought out, though in a less degree, an exceeding and eternal *weight of glory*. We may be faint by reason of the way—almost perishing; but a glimpse of these truths makes the soul glow with heavenly ardor.

Therefore, we know how some whom we love, and who have not carefully examined the great premillennial question, think; we having stood just on that ground, with less light and opportunity than are now afforded. And we have no hesitation in asserting, that wherever a similar mental process is honestly entered upon and persisted in, it will as certainly lead to a similar result, as effect follows cause.

Will not our beloved brethren re-examine the ground? It is written: "Buy the truth, and sell it not."

When we calmly contemplate this "Whitbyan theory," and consider that we live in an age of Bibles, when everybody may read the word of God for himself, so that it would seem impossible for Divine truth to remain concealed, we find, in the manner in which Satan

* Many of the collections of hymns bear witness to this outrage on language.

Digitized by Google

has used it, a masterpiece of strategy. Though so absurd in itself, the adversary has made it appear plausible. By flattering her self-complacency, and by leading her to view her calling in a false light, as though *she* were the chosen instrument for the conversion of the world, thereby to display her zeal and her devotedness, he has foisted it upon the church. Unequalled strategist! Never at a loss for expedients! Thereby he has managed to envelop *the hope of the church* in such a thick and general fog, that the great majority postponed the coming of the Lord to a far-distant period, and not a few laid it aside as an antiquated fable originating in the rude infancy of the gospel, and unworthy of such an enlightened age as the present. And all this when the coming of the Lord is at the very doors! No wonder the Lord said that as a snare shall that day come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

We are inclined to think that within a few years past the confidence of quite a number in the Whitbyan Idea has been considerably weakened. A goodly list of premillennial publications has appeared in all countries of Christendom; and the theory has been rudely shaken, and its inherent weakness demonstrated. We feel thankful in believing that the Prophetic Times, too, has contributed no little towards this result. Missionary operations, likewise, have not turned out as was expected they would; and some people are beginning to think that, quite possibly, our Lord's coming may, after all, not be a thousand years distant. So much has been gained for the truth. These persons do not feel quite so secure in the belief of an indefinite postponement of the advent as they once did. They have latterly looked a little more at the strong declarations of Holy Writ which everywhere presuppose imminence in the Saviour's coming. Such sayings as: "Ye know not when the time is;" "Let your loins be girded, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord;" "Behold, I come as a thief," &c., are weighty. They must rest on good grounds. We rejoice in these changes, and hope that such may be induced to examine the subject with that earnest carefulness which it deserves. Let the Scriptures be studied. Let them speak for themselves as God has caused them to be written; and we are sure that the truth will be found.

Selections.

THE LAST TRUMPET.

I AM anxious to put before you, as clearly as I can, a few of the events that will take place at the sounding of the trump, that our hearts may be led to wait more earnestly, and that we may be stirred up to send forth the cry with increasing urgency, "Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Does He not wait to hear this cry? When King David was returning to his kingdom, after the defeat of his enemies, he might have made a triumphant entry at once, but he would not. When he came to the borders of the land, he waited in order that he might send a message to his own beloved people, his flesh and blood. He sent to the house of Judah, saying, "Why are ye the last to bring the king back to his house? Ye are my brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh; wherefore, then, are ye the last to bring back the king?" And when the message reached the people, we read that "he bowed the hearts of all the men of Judah even as the heart of one man, so that they sent this word unto the king, 'Return thou and all thy servants.' So the king returned, and came to Jordan, and Judah came to Gilgal to go to meet the king to conduct him over Jordan." May it not be for this message of welcome that our gracious Lord, like King David, is waiting? Does not His loving heart long that His own flesh and bones, His own Church, for whom He gave His life, should

Digitized by Google

as one man send up this cry, "O Lord, return?" I believe that we are beginning in these days to hear the sounding of the cry, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh;" that He is sending many a message to us to lead us to pray for His return; and I earnestly hope that we shall have our hearts bowed as the heart of one man, and that our united cry may be, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." I think He waits for it.

And what will happen when He comes? What will be the first great event that shall take place when His trumpet sounds? "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." And what will He do? Will He first of all set in order the things of the universe, and occupy Himself with the great affairs of His universal and glorious government? No! there is something nearer to the heart of Jesus than those important matters, and that is to have His people with Him. That is the first thing. "The dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess. 4:17). Like David's brethren, we shall go to meet the King, to bring Him back in triumph. Does not that, dear friends, give us a glimpse into the Saviour's heart? Does not that show us His great love, and what lies nearest His heart? Yes, His first thought is to have His Church, His bride, with Him. He said, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also;" and He will keep His promise. He will take His people home. Oh, what a wonderful scene that will be, when He comes in His glory!

But it is asked: "Have we any reason to think that this day draws nigh?" I believe, in common with many, that we have. God has given us signs, and bidden us consider them. He has told us that we may "*see* the day approaching," and that when we "*see*" certain "things come to pass," we may "lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh." There is to be a "*cry*" made "at midnight;" there is to be a *knock* at the door; there is to be the "*day-star*" before the dawn. It was one of the rebukes to that generation which could not see the glory of God in Him: "Ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" God has written the sure word of prophecy, "unto which," He says, "ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place."

There are many signs, but time will only permit me to touch upon a few. There are *moral* signs. One of them is the denial of the truth of the books of Moses. There shall come in the last days scoffers, saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" and denying the fact of God's solemn judgment upon the ungodly world by the flood. If there is one thing prominent in these days in the professing Church, it is that there are men calling themselves ministers of Christ, who are undermining the authority of the inspired Word of God, casting contempt upon the history written by Him, and saying that it is an allegory, not to be literally understood. They deny the truth that God visited the world of the ungodly with judgment, and they would thence infer that He never will interfere with the world that now is. As in the case of the Jews, who, in the closing days of their dispensation, cried, "Where is the God of judgment?" so the tendency of the present day is to get rid of the thought of coming judgment. Such is one striking sign of these days—a denial of the inspiration of the Word of God, by men calling themselves Christians, and a consequent denial of the plain and solemn expressions of the living God as to eternal judgment.

Other signs of the last days are given in 2 Tim. 3:1–5. If you read these verses, you will see what we are led to expect—and mark, to expect among *professing Christians*. The characteristics there detailed have existed in all ages among heathens, but the "perilous" nature of "the last days" will consist in their being found in the professing Church. Covetousness, the effort to excel others, insubordination, heartlessness, the want of common honesty, independence, and waywardness of spirit, rushing after pleasure in any shape; are not these characteristics of so-called Christians in

Digitized by Google

these very days? And yet there is plenty of the outward show of religion; churches are multiplied and filled, religion is respectable, meetings are crowded, sermons are listened to. Thus the prediction is fulfilled, that, with all these evils, there shall be great profession, for the description concludes with the words: "Having *the form of godliness, but denying the power.*" Look at the headstrong lawlessness and insubordination of the day; it pervades all classes, whether it be the insubordination of children to their parents, servants to their masters, or the masses of the people to the constituted authorities. A revolutionary and a lawless spirit is abroad working like leaven; everybody seeks to be able to say, "I am my own master."

But enough. The signs I have dwelt upon are numerous, and to my mind, and the minds of many, most striking. Moral—chronological—and political—they combine to send forth the cry, "THE LORD IS AT HAND." Singly we might not consider them of importance: it is not one swallow that makes summer, nor one falling leaf an autumn; and there may have been times when one or another of these signs have been manifested with more or less distinctness. But there never has been a time when, as at the present, they have all been manifested together. It is this which to me gives to their appearance such significance and weight. Surely it is not without meaning. Surely it is a warning, encouraging voice to God's children, repeating in clearer and still clearer accents, "Behold, I come quickly;" "*Surely*, I come quickly." May "the Lord direct our hearts into the love of God, and into the *patient waiting for Christ!*" (2 Thess. 3:5.) And "seeing that [we] look for such things, [may we] be diligent that [we] may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless." (2 Peter 3:14.)

Reader, are you *saved?* Are you ready for that glorious appearing? Whether you concur in the belief that the above-mentioned signs herald His quick approach or not, it is certain that "THE END OF ALL THINGS IS AT HAND," and that "in the days of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God [shall] be finished, as He hath declared to His servants, the prophets."

When that last trump sounds, on which side will you be? Whether that sound be immediate or distant, the question for you to answer is, "Am I ready?" Are you hoping to be saved, though still unconverted? Do you remember how the children of Israel marched seven times round the walls of Jericho, and how, as they fulfilled their task, the doomed people, confident of the strength of their walls, relied upon the works of their hands? Yet what terror and dismay fell upon them when those walls fell flat, and the Israelites marched every man straight before him, and took the city. But the great shout of victorious Israel, and the trumpets of the priests, will be as nothing to "the shout" of the Lord, "the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God." The sound of that last trump will extend over the universe: all the people of God will be raised from the dead, quickened, and changed; and a shout of triumph will burst from them at the glory of that coming Saviour. But it will bring dismay to those who have despised His warnings. If you are waiting in the hope of finding a more convenient season, if you are letting your life ebb out its little stream, and know that you are not yet reconciled to God, and have not a true confidence in Jesus Christ, oh, let me ask you now, even now, to look to Him that died for sinners.

There was one person in that city of Jericho who was saved from the general destruction, and that one was Rahab. She believed in the approaching judgment. She trusted the promise of safety, and placed her confidence in the scarlet line—the token of the covenant between Joshua and herself. She was a great sinner, and deserved destruction, doubtless, as much as any in Jericho; but "*by faith* the harlot Rahab perished not with them that *believed not.*" She bound the scarlet line in her window; she ventured all on the promise made to her, and she was saved. In that moment of fearful destruction she must have been calm: her calmness may not have been understood by her fellow-townsmen, for they could not see the scarlet line, and knew not the secret of her

Digitized by Google

security. That secret was between her and Joshua.

God holds out to you the scarlet line—the precious blood of Christ. He promises, and He cannot lie, that if you trust in that blood—in that Saviour—you shall never perish. Then you may have confidence and assurance. Others may not understand it, and may call it presumption, but it is because they know not the secret covenant that exists between Jesus and the soul that trusts in Him. They cannot see the blood, and they know not its saving power. Then, when on a careless and guilty world, stained with the blood, and rejecting the love of Christ, the last trump peals with its startling and thrilling sound; when many and many a deadened conscience awakes to feel that the day of grace has closed, and that the day of judgment has come; then when the unbelieving cry in their despair to the mountains and rocks to fall on them and hide them "from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb"—you, and all who have trusted in Jesus, will be caught up to meet Him in the air, to be ever with Him, to behold His glory, to serve Him, to reign with Him, and to be like Him. "EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS."

THE SONG OF SONGS.

LET us look at the particulars in this Song. The coronation, to which the husband with such importunity calls the spouse, shall be mutual, as the new espousals ought to be; I mean to say, that the husband is to crown the spouse, his sister; seeing for this end he calls her from the wilderness, "Come and be thou crowned," and at the same time he is crowned by her. Both of these truths are found most clear in the Scriptures, as we shall immediately see.

In the same way it appears that this espousal and coronation of these two friends shall be most public and solemn, such as upon earth has never been yet seen. All which anciently happened to that *same* spouse in the day of her youth, in her first espousal, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, was but as the preliminary and the very obscure shadow of that which shall happen in the second espousal, of which we now speak. There was all fear, terror, and dread, while a covenant was made with most rude persons, hardly superior to the beast; insomuch that those persons who compose that spouse, ask as a favor that the husband might not speak to them himself, but by means of Moses, saying, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Exod. 20 : 19.) Here all, on the contrary, shall be love, which doth cast out fear and dread: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear." (1 John 4 : 18.) There, in the first espousal, the only witnesses and ministers were the angels; here, in the second espousal, the ministers, witnesses, partakers of the joy and jubilee of that most solemn day, shall not be the angels only, but likewise the whole court of the king—all the holy and heavenly Jerusalem, which hath just descended from heaven to our earth. Whereby are naturally understood, without any violence or artifice, those words of the epithalamium, or marriage song: "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart." (Song of Solomon 3 : 11.) By which words is at once comprehended, not only the new and most glad espousal between the two brethren, but likewise the new coronation, as the peculiar King of the Jews, and as the King and Lord of all creation. Both crowns (the universal and the particular) are clearly and distinctly read of in the scriptures. The universal is most frequent in the Psalms and in the Prophets; and it were a shameful thing to be ignorant of it, *or to doubt it.* The particular one may be seen in the 9th chapter of Isaiah, in the 9th of Amos, at verse 11th in Psalms 89 and 132, and, to be short, in the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke, at verse 32d. If the particulars which we have just observed convince you as to who is the true spouse of the Song, I take upon me to assure you that you will profit greatly in the understanding of the divine epithalamium, by comparing it continually with the Prophets and with the Psalms.

Digitized by Google

I know, likewise, that you will still meet with obscure and difficult matters, both from not understanding at once the true signification of the metaphors, or wonderful similitudes by which these obscurities are opened up, and likewise because, after having understood their substance, you will be able without difficulty to confine them to the mystery and time whereof we speak. These particular things, which are not many, held me also for no short period in suspense and indecision, until I adverted, or began to suspect that the spouse sometimes here relateth all that happened to her in the times of her blindness, of her darkness, of her widowhood, of her barrenness, of her transmigration, and the dispersion among all nations. For example, when she says in chapter 3d, "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the city, in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not." (Song 3:1, 2.)

And is not this punctually what has happened to that unhappy one ever since she by her unbelief and wickedness did hide herself from the Sun of Righteousness and leave herself in darkness? Is not this the very thing which her Messiah did most clearly announce, when he said unto her, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come." (John 7:34.) Those who heard these words, St. John continues, did say among themselves (and they spoke the truth without understanding it), "Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me; and where I am, thither ye cannot come?" (John 7:35, 36.) On another occasion the Lord spake to them these words, taken manifestly from the 118th Psalm: "For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. 23:39.) And Paul, fully instructed in the true meaning of the Scriptures, saith expressly, "That blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written." (Romans 11:25, 26.) The spouse takes up the word and relateth what had passed during those nights of her darkness, tribulation, and grief, "the watchmen that go about the city found me."

Of those sentinels who guard the city, the spouse speaketh two, several times, and in a very different manner. Whereby we may suspect that she speaks of two sets of sentinels, both metaphorical, yet very different personages. And who are these? History and daily experience seem to point them out to us as with the finger. Of the one class she saith, "The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me: the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me." (Solomon's Song 5:7.) These, as I think, cannot, it seems, be other than the nations among whom that unhappy one is dispersed, be they heathen, or Mohammedan, or Christian. Who that knows aught of history is ignorant of the great persecutions, tribulations, concussions, cruelties, and barbarities which this miserable widow hath had to suffer in all the land of her captivity? Who is ignorant that upon her have been accomplished to the very full, so many and such clear prophecies, as did announce to her that very fate from Moses even unto Malachi. All (saith Jer. 1:7) that found them have devoured them; and their adversaries said, "We offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice; even the Lord, the hope of their fathers." These tribulations, it is clear and undeniable, have been the greatest and the cruellest among Christians, especially in times of ignorance and barbarism, when the sentinels, not knowing "what spirit they were of," slew, burnt, and besought fire from heaven upon them, thinking that they did God service. To which the spouse seemeth to allude in the Song, saying, "The children of my mother fought against me."

Of the other watchmen, she sayeth merely that having fallen in with them, she besought them saying, "Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" Here is the question, but the answer is wanting. The meeting with these watchmen we see, but no beatings nor cruelties do we see,

Digitized by Google

only instead of any reply, a deep silence. And who can these be? To me the Rabbis or Hebrew doctors present themselves. Of whom, saith the spouse (chap. 3) she asked for her beloved, or asked of them sure marks of the Messiah, but received no information nor distinct reply. And is not this what comes to pass, and hath come to pass until this day? Wherefore she concludes by saying, "It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth, I held him and would not let him go." As if she had said, after that my teachers said nothing to me, nor gave me any clear idea of my beloved, after that I left them and despised them as most false and most ignorant masters, after that instead of hearing them, I heard Elias, Moses and the prophets. (Luke 16: 31.) Then instantly at once I found him whom I desired, "it was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth, I held him and would not let him go."

If with this idea in the mind the whole of this nuptial song be read, if it be judiciously and rightly combined with the prophets, and the Psalms, and with other scriptures of the New Testament, neither few nor obscure, it appears to me certain that there will remain no insuperable difficulty in any part of this Song of Songs, but that it will all be found easy and plain, from the first word even to the last. A thing which doth not happen, nor can easily nor even possibly happen upon any idea, system, or mode of thinking, which till now hath obtained concerning this Song, not certainly carnal but spiritual, not human but divine, and I may add this one word more, a Song not for this age, or for that age, but for the *age to come*, in the new heavens and the new earth after Messiah shall return from heaven to our earth, having received a kingdom in glory and majesty.

Read now the 45th Psalm, and you shall understand it wholly. Oh, what things remain yet to be spoken, and what very important reflections I see myself constrained to omit! But may I not leave this defect to be supplied by considerate readers? To whom for the present I refer, because I have neither time nor talent for so much.

THE RIGHTEOUS REIGN.

Isa. 32: 1; Jer. 23: 5.

It will be order then,
Under the sceptre of a holy King,
Each creature, low and high, angels and men,
To the great concord sweetly ministering.
Self-will unknown, true harmony restored,
Happy obedience to the righteous Lord;
The multitude of wills all lost in one—
The will that rules from the eternal throne.
Disorders, strifes, confusions, groans, and cries,
Then ended in the endless harmonies!
O age of order, how we long for thee,
In these chaotic days of dark perplexity!

It will be freedom then!
True freedom such as nations never saw,
Even at their freest, in the days of old—
The freedom of submission to sure law;
Freedom from self, and sin, and lust, and gold;
Subjection to the truth, which maketh free;
Surrender of the intellect and soul
To a divine and sweet captivity.
O age of freedom! how we long for thee,
In these proud, self-will'd days of spurious liberty!

It will be morning then!
Morn of the long, long look'd-for golden day;
Pure summer sunlight, dropping only health
And never-shaded joy, without one ray
Of poisonous bitterness to scorch or sear;
But calling up creation's boundless wealth
And beauty bright through all the eternal year,
The old sad night forever pass'd away.
O morn of love, when, when wilt thou appear?

Luther says: "You say it *may be* interpreted thus,—*it may be* also understood thus,—*it may* also be answered thus,—*it may be* literally interpreted thus,—or *it may be* mystically interpreted thus. Away with all these may be's. These, my friend Catherinus, are all refuges of lies, mere loopholes of escape; and evidently go to confirm the truths I maintain. Speak thus: This is the meaning of the passage, and it cannot be understood otherwise. You will thus keep to one simple and uniform sense of Scripture, as I always do, and always have done. This way of proceeding is to be a divine; the former a sophist. For you know in every controverted subject *we must abide by the literal sense*, which is uniform throughout the whole Scriptures."—*Luther's "Pope Confounded."*

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

THE EASTER SONG.

A SERMON BY DR. SEISS.

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where in thy victory?"—1 Cor. 15 : 55.

It is impossible for man to tell out all the momentous implications of the Easter triumph. We know some of its facts, but we see not yet all of their blessedness. It brought up Christ again from the dead. This is the central truth. It recovered the Son of God from the tomb. It broke down the gates of death to set the crucified Saviour at liberty. It reanimated his lifeless body, and brought him forth in glorious immortality. It returned him in undying life to the world which had seen him die, and had laid him in the grave. It restored him to his bewildered and sorrowing friends, and revived the hopes which had been buried in his grave. But the length and breadth and depth and height of all this passes knowledge.

The text is part of a great apostolic hymn upon the subject. A mortal man here takes his station by the Saviour's vacant grave, and sends out a challenge which overpowers us by its majesty. It is so triumphant in its terms, that we tremble and are ready to despair of ever being able to take them up to make them our own. And yet, he knew whereof he was affirming, and spoke by the Holy Ghost for our learning and comfort, as well as the joy of his own personal faith. With him it is our blessed privilege to-day, as part of our great Easter joy, to take up with equal confidence the same defiant words, "*O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*"

It would, indeed, be madness for us to say that death and the grave have no pangs, no powers. Suffering humanity sees and feels too much of them to deny their existence, or their bitterness. Too sharp, and sore, and manifest, are the pains of death, and too vast and increasing is the multitude which tenants the grave, to affirm that one has no sting or the other no victory. We are all members of circles in which these enemies have made, and are ever making, sad havoc. Whether rich or poor, and however careful, we have all felt the presence of the destroyer, and his unrelenting spoliations.

"There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there;
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But hath one vacant chair.
The air is full of farewells of the dying,
And mournings for the dead.—
The voice of Rachel for her children crying,
Will not be comforted."

"Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of trouble. He cometh up like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth as it were a shadow, and continueth not." No matter how blessed our associations, how necessary our lives to those connected with us, how much of good and hope attaches to our continuance in the world, how tender the ties that link us to friends and life, death is our natural inheritance. Many great minds and much laudable energy are ever busy combating disease, and seeking to keep off death. Sanitary commissions and health officers are constituted by governments, and laws for the preservation of life are enacted by parliaments and senates. Physicians are sent out by hundreds and thousands to compound medicines, and administer them, to heal the sick. Thousands and thousands of sleepless eyes and willing hands watch and serve day and night by the bedsides of suffering, anxious to save disabled men from oncoming dissolution. But this pale slayer of mankind laughs at all efforts to intercept his march, overleaps all barriers thrown in his way, and strikes down and carries off whom he will,—the infant from its mother's arms, the bride from her husband's embraces, the youth from the parental home, the philanthropist from his labors, the merchant from his counting-room, the father from his family, and, sooner or later, every one, till all are hidden in the cold, cold ground! Around our churches lie the crowded graveyards. The

Digitized by Google

highways are lined with cemeteries full of dead. Every morning paper has its list of obituaries. Every month registers its long bills of mortality. And everywhere, throughout the length and breadth of the world, death reigns, and the grave exults!

We cannot deny these facts; nor yet that pangs and pains and stings accompany them. It is no pleasant thing to have before us, in the midst of all our best successes, fondest affections, and most joyous hopes, that the day neareth when the grave shall close over us, and over all whom we love. We may teach ourselves not to murmur, and learn to submit; but is it nothing for the mother to be bereft of the babe of her bosom, of the husband of her heart, of the son of her pains and prayers? Is it nothing to have one's home desolated and broken up by the ravages of death, and one's best friends carried to the grave, and one's own life in jeopardy every hour? Are there no griefs in the partings of the living from the dead, no bitternesses in the tears of bereaved affection, no sorrows in the vacancies created in our dwellings by the strokes that carry our parents, our associates, and our children to the tomb? Oh the darkness, the anguish, the bleeding wounds, the incurable pains, the cruel lacerations, which death is continually inflicting! Full eighteen hundred years have now already past since Jesus rose from the dead; and yet all this tide of desolation continues to roll on without abatement, and without signs of interruption. Wherein, then, consists the truth of this apostolic song, or of the Easter triumph which it puts into our lips?

Brethren, "Be not faithless, but believing." The challenge is not too bold. The triumph it asserts is not imaginary. Let us only penetrate a little deeper into the realities of the case, and we will not only justify the apostle, but be prepared to join him in his victorious words.

I. *Since Jesus has risen, death is no longer death to them that believe.*—"The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." But the believer's sins are all forgiven, taken away, forever buried. What then has the law to say to him? The law pronounces a great and mighty curse; but that curse has no power except against the transgressor. The law has no strength to condemn the innocent. Who ever heard of a law that had? Only the guilty are under the law's power. But the believer is not guilty. He has sinned, but Christ has answered for him, and his sins are no longer imputed to him. Jesus has borne their penalty. His blood has cancelled them. His obedience covers them. They will never again come into remembrance against him who trusts in Christ. The law, therefore, has nothing more to say. Sin being blotted out, its strength to condemn and curse is gone also. And as death derives all its harming power from the law's penalty and condemnation, sin being removed, all the evil of death is removed also. Death is the wages of sin; and when sin is taken away the penalty ceases; and if death still continues, it must now be a different thing, and fill a very different place from that which the law pronounces. Its form may remain, but its sting is gone.

Death has no power to harm a Christian. He may die; but he loses nothing by it. It may carry him out of this world, but it cannot inflict the slightest disadvantage. His dying is not a curse, but a peaceful sinking from a world of trouble into rest. So far from being a calamity to him, it has become a gracious discipline and helper of his peace. With the law satisfied, condemnation gone, hell divested of power over him, what has he to fear? Let death do its worst, it cannot harm him. Let the grave close over him, it cannot quench his peace and hope. It may serve to take him from the toils and turmoils of earth, but it cannot make his comforts or his prospects less. Precious before God is the death of His saints. Their pains and aches are over, and their rewards are waiting. We may speak of them as dead, but they are only sleeping—sweetly sleeping, till the dawn of a better morrow. We may talk of losses, but they have suffered none. Their very death has been their gain. They are far better off than here. Easter brings us these glad tidings, and certifies them to us. Why not, then, take up the apostolic song: "*O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!*"

Digitized by Google

II. *Since Jesus has risen, believers may rightfully indulge the hope possibly never to die at all.*—Though it is appointed unto men once to die, the rule is not without exceptions. Every dispensation shows some relaxation of that law. Before Moses, and before the flood, there was an Enoch, who walked with God, and preached righteousness, and was taken up to glory without tasting of death. Under the Mosaic dispensation, there was an Elijah, who withstood the priests of Baal, and remained true to God amid abounding apostasy, and Jehovah sent a chariot and horses from heaven to convey him out of the world without allowing him to be touched by death or the grave. Neither of these prophets ever died. And what has been in other dispensations is to be repeated in ours. Whether or not we credit the traditions concerning the Virgin Mary and the Apostle John in this respect, it is one of the great prophecies of the New Testament, and one of the great Christian mysteries, that the time is coming when a vast body of living and waiting people of God shall be suddenly caught up, from earth to heaven, without ever knowing what death is. "Behold," says the apostle, "I show you a mystery." And what is the mystery? "We shall not all sleep,"—*not all die*,—"but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." All Christ's people shall be "changed," but *not all* in the same way. Some are changed by death and resurrection, others are changed without falling asleep first; for "*we shall not all sleep*" When Christ comes again, as He has promised, He will find two classes of His people; one class sleeping in the dust of the earth, and the other class living on the earth;—some dead, and others still in the world. Those asleep will be resurrected—raised from their graves—and so "changed." But those alive and remaining, will never die. These are to be *translated*, as Enoch and Elijah were translated, and "caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord," without dying. The Saviour himself refers to this where He says: "In that night there shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left." This *taking* is to occur in the time of Christ's second coming; and will be a sudden ereption from amid the common occupations of life direct to Christ's presence, without the intervention of death. The same is referred to in our Lord's declaration to Martha: "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;" *i. e.*, be raised again from the dead. "And whosoever liveth,"—*is living*, to wit, at the time the dead are raised,—"and believeth in me, *shall never die;*"—never die, because he shall be transferred direct from earth to heaven. Hence, says the Apostle, "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that *whether we wake or sleep*," that is, whether at the time *living* or *dead*, "we should live together with Him." The distinct implication is, that those faithful ones, then alive, shall never die, but at once put on immortality, and live on eternally.

No true Christian, therefore, has any right to count on dying. He may die; but it is not certain that he will. We cannot tell when Christ will come. "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man." It is a secret which God has reserved in His own power. He may not come for a long time yet; but we have no right to say that He will not come this very year, this very springtime, this very night. We know not when the time is, and therefore we cannot say that it will not be in our time. From the very beginning it was preached as a thing that might occur any moment. There has never been a period when any one had a right to say that it would not occur in his day. So firmly were the first Christians pervaded with the expectation of living to see it, that they were in constant watchfulness for it; and the Apostle assumes it as so much a matter of course, that he mixes himself and those to whom he wrote with all the transactions he describes. "*We* shall not all sleep, but *we* shall all be changed." And if *he* dared not put off that great event beyond *his* lifetime, and was impelled by the Spirit to keep it before him and his readers as ever impending, how dare

Digitized by Google

we, now that 1800 years of delay have passed, for one moment affirm that Christ will not come in our day? He will come. That coming has already been deferred beyond all anticipation. The signs of its nearness are thicker and intenser now than ever they have been. And the sacred exhortations to keep ourselves in lively expectation and constant readiness, are so numerous and pointed, that I cannot see how any Christian is warranted in having any other belief but that he shall be still living when the Lord comes. And if then living, he shall never die—never see death at all. People may think we dream; but it is the clear and unmistakable truth of God. It is promised that some shall never die, and the chances are, if we are faithful, that we may be among the number. And with such a prospect legitimately ours, the great apostolic song may well live in our hearts and break from our lips: "*O Death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!*"

III. But whether the believer lives to see that day or not, *since Jesus has risen, death and the grave can have but a temporary sway at most.*—No success is victory, unless what is captured can be held; and Easter is the pledge and proof that all the trophies of this enemy will presently have to be yielded up again. Jesus has the keys of death and of hell. He encountered the tyrant in his own grim realm, and came off victorious, leading captivity captive. And He has overcome for all that are His. It was as our substitute He died, and as our representative and forerunner He rose. His triumph is our triumph. And as He could not be holden of death, so neither can the grave long hold those who belong to Him. The day is drawing near—a day appointed of God—when all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth. The decree has gone out from on high: "O death, I will be thy plague! O grave, I will be thy destruction!" Easter shows that decree already going into effect. *Jesus is risen*, and in that resurrection is the demonstration that whatever remains of its fulfilment must come. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him, . . For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." There is not a departed saint who will not come back. There is not a sleeping child of God, but he shall be reawakened into life. There is not a buried babe in Christ, but it shall be recovered from the land of silence. And though the grave may claim our bodies, and clamor for them in the aches and pains we feel, as sure as we trust in Jesus it will have to let them go again. The patriarchs! they shall reappear. The prophets and apostles! they shall be regathered from their tombs. God's lowly poor who sleep in potters-fields! they shall all come out of them. And wherever death or the grave has made a captive of any of God's holy ones, that captive shall be given up, never to be assailed again. From the north, and from the south, from the east, and from the west, from all climes, from all conditions, from all ages, the ransomed of the Lord shall come, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of their Father.

Nor will they come in the feebleness and corruptibleness of this poor life. "The dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." From every Christian grave shall spring a form, lovely as that of an angel, pure as heaven, and imperishable as the Christ who hath redeemed it. Talk of buds bursting into flowers—of bald branches arraying themselves in shining bloom—of torpid seeds and bulbs sending up out of the dark earth their tinted cups of grateful odors—of worms transformed into creatures of winged glory—of dull eggs giving forth birds which gladden the forests with their plumage and their songs,—none of these things even begin adequately to image the glory that shall be revealed in these poor stems of humanity when once the springtime of the coming resurrection dawns. Then shall immortality plant its standard on the vanquished grave, and death be swallowed up of victory!

Digitized by Google

What matters it, then, whether we wake or whether we sleep? The victory is sure in either case. We see the triumph from afar. The glory of its coming cheers our sanctuaries today, illumines every believer's grave, and shines away the darkness of the tomb. In anticipation we already see the death of death. Each returning Easter preaches it afresh. These flowers and these anthems tell of it. In the Divine purpose it is already achieved. And in that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, we shout, "*O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!*"

"Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

"THE VICTORY!" Behold! it issues from the Saviour's tomb! It shakes the world with the glory of its coming! It drives the hosts of hell away! It stations angels in our sepulchres! It fills the air with halleluias! It wakes the songs of cherubim and seraphim! It transforms and transfigures the world! It enacts a new Genesis on sublunary things! It clothes the hills with salvation, and the mountains with praise!

"THE VICTORY!" Heaven bursts out with shouts of harmony! The trumpets of eternity sound their golden notes! Archangels call in triumph from the skies! Earth lifts up its welcomes to its Redeemer King! God's tabernacle takes its place with men! Tears cease! Death ends! Sorrow flies! The curse departs! Pain terminates! The day puts on immortality, and knows no more night! The golden City descends, displays its jasper walls, and opens its gates of pearl! The crystal river starts! The Tree of Life stretches its healing branches over the ransomed race! Time melts into eternity! THE CHRIST REIGNS KING FOR EVER!

"THE VICTORY! THE VICTORY!" Seize it, ye prophets, who wondered at the mysterious promise, but followed it through sufferings and tears! Share it, ye mighty apostles, though ye doubted when ye heard of the broken tomb! Take it, ye martyrs, who welcomed nakedness, sword, cross, famine, rack, wild beasts and devouring flames, that ye might obtain it! Come and enjoy it, ye humble poor of God, whom men despised, but whose sacred dust the angels watch till crowned with the princely splendor of the resurrection! And thou weak one, with hardly strength enough to embrace thy Master's cross,—and thou sorrowing one, whose tears fall like rain over the graves of thy dead,—and thou tempted one, through much tribulation struggling onward for the heavenly kingdom,—one and all, lift up your heads; anticipate your triumph; and sing aloud your Easter song: "O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING! O GRAVE, WHERE IS THY VICTORY!"

TOMB OF THE MACCABEES.

THE second report of the French mission to Palestine, dated at Jerusalem, July, 1870, gives an account of M. Guérin's explorations of Samaria, announcing the discovery and identification of the famous mausoleum of the illustrious family of the Maccabees, at Kirbet el Medieh, the true Modin, or Modicum, of the Scriptures. After a careful consideration of all the passages in the books of the Maccabees, in which the monuments which Simon raised over the tombs of his father, mother, brothers and others, at Modin, are described, and an examination of the conjectured spots of them, M. Guérin has been enabled to identify the site beyond question. By excavations made under his own eye, he was enabled to trace the entire plan of the edifice, the existence of seven sepulchral chambers, surmounted by seven pyramids placed in line, each covering the ceiling of one chamber. Among the adjoining ruins were found numbers of pieces of monolithic columns, much mutilated, but all of the same diameter, the remains of the magnificent colonnade which decorated the front of the building, which completes the evidence of the discovery. The tombs were explored. The floors were covered with small mosaic cubes, in some cases still adhering together; and one of them contained five or six human bones, perhaps of these illustrious Jewish heroes.

With this confirmation of the historic reliability of the Books of the Maccabees, our readers may be encouraged to re-examine those books. They will be found bound between the Old and New Testaments in many editions of the Bible.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. IX. JUNE AND JULY, 1871. Nos. 6 & 7.

Special Contributions.

ENTHUSIASM.

"Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth."—Rev. 3 : 16.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. 2 : 10.

The word enthusiasm always seems to be used in a disreputable sense when applied to religious character or feeling, and is invariably confounded with fanaticism, whose indiscreet and offensive demonstrations are too often calculated to bring religion itself into contempt and disrepute. Intensity and earnestness of zeal, and fervor of feeling in the great matter which above all others should engage our attention and enlist our best efforts, are usually regarded as indications of a weak and ill-balanced mind, or distempered fancy and perverted taste. More especially is this the case where earnestness in practice and depth of devout feeling are accompanied by a belief in the near approach of Christ's personal advent, and a joyous longing and waiting for it. Such are irredeemably insane, and it is useless to waste words or efforts upon them.

The same word is used approvingly when applied to art, science, business, or anything by which the interest, the comfort, or the pleasure of the human race is advanced. He who is lukewarm or indifferent in the prosecution of these pursuits can never hope to attain even ordinary success, much less the height of excellence, and is justly regarded as a weak pretender who inconsistently aspires to what will be forever unattainable to him. It is supposed to be highly creditable, and the contrary spirit evidence of craven poltroonery, to be full of intense zeal and earnestness in the legalized slaughter of our fellow-beings; and a glowing enthusiasm when our national rights and institutions are in jeopardy, manifested often in the most indiscreet and excited manner, is regarded as the noblest patriotism. How diverse often may be the estimates placed upon the same thing by man and his Creator.

The world is full of enthusiasm upon any subject that claims its interest. For its advantage and the increase of knowledge it sends a Sir John Franklin, with many others, to endure untold sufferings and privations, and eventually to die the death of martyrs for the temporal benefit of their kind, and in the prosecution of great but exclusively worldly projects. What a hero! How grand, how noble, how utterly oblivious of self, and what an insignificant thing is a human life to the prosecution of a great idea! exclaim his ardent worshippers. And human love in its might devotes every energy, expends all its means, in efforts to gain tidings of the loved and the lost; and at last, with all the fervor and fire of youth, old age and decrepitude braves the dangers and terrors of the ocean to relieve with some hope of certainty the suspense of an agonized heart. How beautiful! How touching! exclaim poetry and sentiment, aye, and the deepest genuine feeling too, for it *is* a sublime spectacle, and one to stir to its depths the loving human heart. But have those who can thus appreciate the heroic and the touching words of com-

Digitized by Google

mendation and admiration only when such traits and feelings are elicited alone by temporal things and human objects? And, shall the children of this world be wiser in their generation than the children of light? Is there nothing grand or heroic in the meek and unobtrusive missionary going forth to suffering, privation, and death for no temporal advantage, but in the prosecution of something more than a noble idea,—even the deliverance of immortal souls from an immortal perdition. Is this not an object worth sacrificing one's life for? Or is it a wild chimera? The product of a distempered mind and an enthusiastic imagination? Is this or an expedition to the North Pole more likely to confer solid and permanent benefit upon the human race?

And is there nothing beautiful and touching in the missionary mother *sacrificing* her instinctive maternal feelings, not selfishly indulging them, for this great idea, or this great reality as we claim? If this is enthusiasm, does it not unmistakably evince its sincerity, and can there be no admiration, no approval bestowed upon such deeds? Is it mere fanaticism because it is in the cause of Christ?

Are human efforts discouraged or intermitted in the pursuit of their schemes by disaster or death? When Sir John Franklin falls a Dr. Kane enthusiastically starts in pursuit of him; many more are ready to lay down their lives for the same object. Notwithstanding Sepoy atrocities and Chinese massacres, who will relinquish his purpose of gaining riches or acquiring military fame in those unsafe heathen lands? Is not every quarter of the globe ransacked, every danger braved, every toil and privation endured by the devotees of knowledge, wealth, and military glory? Who does not commend their energy, their perseverance, their zeal, their entire *absorption* in what will probably eventuate in worldly good? And yet the missionary victims, who have gained a crown and a kingdom, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, are denounced as foolish enthusiasts, who had much better have remained at home. Their own imprudence has brought it upon them, and they had no right to expect aught else when they persisted in going among those uncivilized heathens. The grand, the beautiful, the holy, in this thrilling picture of the slaughter of helpless women for Christ's sake, is not seen by those whose eyes can only admire the beauty of worldly sacrifice,—who can only appreciate the suffering that is entirely selfish.

Yes, the children of the world are wiser in their generation than the children of light; and well would it be to emulate their zeal, their energy, their determined and unremitting pursuit of that which is to them most important; their ideas of importance, however, concentrating in temporal good, ours in eternal. How impressive, solemn, and instructive the lesson to be gathered from Madame Roland's career. Her affecting history is a mournful exemplification of enthusiastic devotion to a great idea or principle, eventuating in martyrdom; a martyrdom only sustained by the uncertain hope of the ultimate triumph of a cause that would confer worldly good alone, and without even the superstitious support in death to which the Romanist clings. There is something for the timid, doubting, lukewarm Christian to ponder. What endurance; what heroism; what a grand triumph over the fear of death!

"Faithful unto death." Faithful in unswerving zeal, or even enthusiasm, in Christ's cause. We see how diametrically opposite is His opinion on this subject to that of man's. He cannot tolerate a lukewarm feeling in His service, or languid indifference as to doctrine or practice. Better serve the world at once without hesitation or prevarication, for then the true character will be recognized, and there will not be the same danger to other weak and wavering ones. Be one thing or the other. Worldlings acknowledge and act upon this principle in other matters. How much contempt is felt for him who is not positive in his convictions; who hovers between two parties, sometimes acting with one, sometimes with the other, and scarcely knowing what he does believe.

Although truth is generally found between extremes, we should be uncompromising in accepting it, and in putting it into practice, so faithful that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we must do it all to the glory of

Digitized by Google

God. Having an eye single to His glory in the most microscopic transactions of every-day life, as well as in the sacrifice of existence, should His providence demand it. Unto death it must be, and we know not whether that death shall come in the natural way, or whether bloody martyrdom shall be ours. If we are intensely in earnest a martyrdom of some kind it will surely be, for *all* that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. We may be sneered at as enthusiasts or fanatics, and be told that the days of martyrdom are over, but as we have not had a revelation to that effect, it is best to be prepared for any emergency. A quick voyage across the ocean will not be less agreeable because we have prepared for a storm.

This unfaltering faithfulness until the end of our career, can only be secured by love,—love to God, with all the ardor of our being, and love to our neighbor even of the same quality and degree as we feel to ourselves. This will enable us to comply with all commands, no matter how difficult or how conflicting with our human inclinations and tastes. If our love to God is of this kind and degree, all our aspirations, aims and efforts must necessarily conduce to His glory. They cannot be selfish. And if we love our neighbor as ourselves, how simple a thing it will be to do him justice; to do unto him as we would have him do unto us in every particular. Actuated by this feeling, how *can* we do him injury? "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the *fulfilling* of the law." What a simplifying of Christian obligations and duties. If all our prayerful energies then are directed to the acquisition of this all-powerful love, what more have we to do? This motive power will impel to everything, and how comparatively easy to crucify the flesh with its affections and lustre? How readily solved the problem, so mystifying to those who do not possess this power of even loving enemies? How delightfully surmounted will be all our natural supineness, and how cheerfully and with what interest will we perform the most arduous tasks, and count not our lives dear unto ourselves that we may finish our course with joy? Suffering then will be no hardship in our Master's service; the magnet will draw us to Him through all obstacles, dangers, and difficulties. How delightful to be thus drawn without an effort!

These are not the vagaries of a glowing imagination, nor an enthusiastic temperament. It is our duty, our privilege, and our joy to possess this all-controlling force. Let the Laodiceans, and those who know not the power of Christ's love, call us fanatics. We are in company with apostles, martyrs, and many now living of Christ's mystical body. This love we *must* have to bear us safely through the temptations and fearful dangers that threaten us on all sides. We *must* have it to enable us to maintain our faithfulness and integrity to the end; the end of our lives, or it may be the end of this world in its present evil form. Let us not be satisfied with a mere form of religion, with a faithful discharge of its external routine, with doing like the rest of professing Christendom, or most surely we shall be condemned with the foolish virgins. There is something more in religion than these, as we shall discover to our bitter sorrow when it is too late, if Christ's thrilling admonitions and loving entreaties are unheeded. He is knocking loudly now at Laodicean doors, and He bids them be zealous and repent, but how imminent His coming!

And then the reward promised to the faithful one, how disproportionate to the service. Even a crown of life! Not a crown of death, such as belongs to the potentates of this world. With what disappointment and dissatisfaction should we turn away from such a reward, which only brings its possessor trouble, care, sorrow, and, in too many instances, death. True, indeed, is it that "uneasy lies the head that wears an earthly crown." What visions of revolutions, assassinations, and guillotines, arise at that word. What oceans of blood, in which the helpless are drowned, flow turbulently past our shuddering eyes. What dishonor, what base intrigues, what crimes of every hue recur to our dismayed memory. How massacres and poisonings, and bloody knouts, and Siberian exiles form one homo-

Digitized by Google

geneous picture to horrify the vision, and to agonize the heart.

And how quickly one evanescent and unfortunate dynasty is replaced by another one, equally evanescent and unfortunate. With all the struggles, the crimes, the misery to secure perpetuation, how ineffectual they all are. The longest dynasty must come to an end in this ephemeral world, even under the most favorable circumstances. How earnestly then would we protest against such a reward as that. We would leave all of earth's turmoils, cares, anxieties and sins, where they have had their origin, and to their fiendish instigator, who best knows how to enjoy them.

But the dazzling crown of life. What visions of beauty, holiness, peace, and satisfaction glide sweetly by at the thought. We know we are not worthy to wear it, nor fitted to exercise its functions, but why should we trouble ourselves? The Lamb *maketh all things new*, and the requisite worthiness and necessary attributes, will not be wanting when the time comes for their manifestation and exercise. Even *now* are we in the primary department of training for our exalted position, and when mortal disabilities are removed, and we are promoted to the immediate preceptorship of Christ, our progress will be rapid indeed.

Then no revolutions, massacres, and commotions to secure possession. The King of kings and Lord of lords to crown us, and faithful, devoted and loving subjects to welcome us. Righteous adjudications to characterize our administrations, and perpetual peace, prosperity, happiness, and holiness the result. No trouble about perpetuity; even as the sun and moon shall we endure throughout endless generations. Then indeed shall the wilderness and solitary places be made glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose. Joy and gladness shall prevail throughout the universe —thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

Is it not presumptuous and arrogant for mortals to entertain such expectations? We do not fully understand their nature, but we dare not explain away what has been so repeatedly promised by the Infinite, and who anathematizes those who subtract one iota from His inspired word of truth. So, with deepest reverence and true humanity, we can only say "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight."

M. E. S.

THE REGENERATION.

In 1 Cor. 15: 45, 47, our Saviour is called "the second Adam." In Acts 11: 21, His kingdom is said to be "a restitution." If, therefore, we can find from the Scriptures what His kingdom *will be*, we may surmise from it, what the first Adam's *would have been*, and knowing this we shall the better understand our present relation to that future kingdom, and be able to define what are our hopes and expectations in that kingdom.

1. In the temptation when Satan offered Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world" (St. Luke 4: 5), he declared (v. 6) "for that is delivered [or yielded] to me," and our Saviour calls him (St. John 14: 30), "the Prince of the world." The kingdoms could have been "yielded" or delivered, or betrayed (as the Greek word παραδεδοται may be better translated) only to Adam to whom they had been given (Gen. 1: 28). Satan has at all times aimed to put some worshipper of himself into this position of universal power, "to whomsoever I will I give it" (St. John 4: 6), and he has raised great kings, Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon, who have all striven to be masters of the world, and more or less nearly attained it. His last great protégé, the Antichrist, will no doubt attain more nearly than they all to this coveted honor. The great contest seems to be, and to have been at all times since Adam's fall, whether Jesus Christ should possess the earth; or Satan, through some representative man under his own influence of power. It is not, therefore, any violent supposition that God's original purpose was, that the first Adam (not sinning) should have been king over the whole of His children, whose many generations would as now have succeeded him: and that Adam "*yielded*" this to Satan.

2. We learn from Scripture that our Saviour will be the "Great King" (Ps. 48: 2; Matt.

Digitized by Google

5:35), "the King of kings" (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14, 15, 3), "the King over all the earth" (Zech. 14:9), "that His dwelling will be at Jerusalem" (Rev. 21:3, 22; 3:12; St. Matt. 5:25). Where there will be again the "Tree of Life," as in Adam's paradise (Ezek. 47;7, 12; Rev. 2:7). That He will have kings under Him (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 1:15, 21, 24). Who will be priests also (Rev. 1:6, 20, 6), as all kings were formerly; and who having passed through death and resurrection (Rev. 20:6, 5, 10), will be sinless, and will have "a right to the Tree of Life" (Rev. 27:22, 14), and so will have immortality.

"Kings and priests" argue with subjects and sinners. That there will be in that kingdom in its earlier stages on the earth, *men* subject to death, to sickness, and to sin, is evident enough from Isaiah 65:20, from Rev. 22:15, and from the statement both in Ezekiel and in Revelations; that these men will be our descendants continued upon the earth, as we from Noah and from Adam, the article "Restitution" (Proph. Times of Jan. 7, 1871, p. 3), sufficiently proves; that they will be distributed in cities as now, we may infer from the parable of the talents (St. Luke 19:17); that they will be divided into nations as now, we know from Zachariah (14:18), where the name of Egypt is mentioned as one of them.

In our Saviour's kingdom there will be, therefore, two classes. The one composed of men like in all respects to ourselves; men of Adam's race; our descendants; mortal; living in all respects as we do, and requiring rulers to restrain and regulate their lives. The other class composed of men who have passed through this life; *ourselves*, or those of us who shall have "attained to the resurrection from amongst the dead," *i. e.*, to the "first resurrection;" who will be without sin, and immortal by having access to the tree of life, and who will be the kings of the earth, under the direct guidance and authority of our Saviour Himself.

3. Let us apply this to the supposed kingdom of the first Adam. There was in his paradise the tree of Life, as in the New Jerusalem; but with it the tree of knowledge, which will *not* be in the new earth. If Adam had remained unfallen, not having tasted the fatal fruit, his children would have yet had this trial or test always before them. A few would have maintained their integrity, not eating. The many would have eaten and fallen. Soon there would have been upon the earth the same two classes, mortals and immortals, subjects and rulers, all under the kingship of the sinless Adam. A world so constituted would have differed from that we now have mainly in this, viz., that the unfallen rulers would have been pure and holy men, who would have ruled righteously and justly; while the general affairs of the world, the buying and selling, the building, the weaving, the plowing and sowing, would have been much as we now see.

In the world to come there are abundant intimations that all these things will be done as now (see Isaiah 65:21), not that resurrected men will buy and sell, plow and reap. The kings of the earth do not do these things now, but their subjects. So will the *subjects* in our Saviour's kingdom, or the men descended from our present race.

But there will be this most important difference between the two kingdoms Under the first Adam, immortals would have been *always liable to fall:* there ever stood the tree of knowledge. The mortals could have had no hope of life beyond their allotted period: there was no Saviour, no Redeemer from the inevitable death. Under the second Adam there *can be no fall* for the immortals; they are the children of the resurrection (St. Luke 20:36), his body (1 Cor. 12:27), his members (Eph. 5:30), and no tree of knowledge, nor other test of faith, will be put before them. For the mortals we are not told what shall be the conditions under which they also may attain to eternal life; their dispensation has not been revealed to us; there is room to surmise that they will "be changed," who endure whatever test may be presented to them (perhaps the annual visit to Jerusalem, Zachariah 14:16), and that they who fail or refuse to go up and "keep the feast of tabernacles," will be cast into Gehenna (Isaiah 66:24), will die the (second) death, from which there will then *be no resur-*

Digitized by Google

rection. We *are* told that the period of natural life will be again lengthened (Isaiah 65:20, 22), as in the days of the antediluvians, and that the ferocity of animals, as well as of men, will be restrained.

4. What is our position in this life, as sons of Adam, in relation to that future kingdom? We must first believe it. Then being baptized in the name of Jesus, and eating his flesh, we become co-workers with Him here, as well as in the future; therefore must we, by some means in our power, bring others into the same relationship with Him, so that we may hasten the filling up of His appointed number, and may hasten the time of His coming and His kingdom. Especially shall we do this by convincing others (*from the Scriptures*) of the character and nature of that kingdom, so that Christian men may no longer be looking for a heaven of shadows, an inanity, an Elysian field, whose languid delights are unworthy of those whose ambition it is (*and ought to be*) to reign, but whose highest views of Heaven scarcely go beyond a happiness that they do not define, and whose particulars they are unwilling to inquire into.

We are the field in which the Gospel seed (and also the tares) have been or are being sown. If we receive and cultivate the word in us, we shall prove to be the "good seed;" we shall be gathered into the garner, we shall have part with our Lord when He comes into His kingdom, we shall reign with Him in five cities, ten cities, according to the use we have made of the seed (talents) committed to us. We shall there dwell in mansions (St. John 14:2), eat food (Rev. 3:20; Isaiah 37:30; 65:21; St. Matt. 26:29), and wear as clothing, not only the garment of our Lord's righteousness (Isaiah 61:10), but also the product of as veritable looms as we see in these days. Moreover we shall have an immortality, not *inherent* and *essential*, whereby we should be "as Gods," but *conferred* upon us through and by (for our Redeemer's sake) the permission to eat constantly (Rev. 22; 14, 27; Ezek. 47:12) of the fruits of the tree of life; an immortality quite as real and as desirable, though even depending, as now, on God's daily provision for us, as the immortality Satan has persuaded men they have *of necessity* and *irrespective of God*. Nor is this more difficult to understand than is the immortality we have already had for twenty, fifty, sixty years, through the use of the "grass of the field," or of the flesh which is grass.

But especially will our occupation be much more than that of casting crowns and singing hallelujahs before the throne of God—a point at which the mythology of the present day stops—but we shall have the great honor and happiness of ruling and regulating those who cannot rule themselves aright, often interceding for those who cannot of themselves come to Christ, of healing them that suffer as we have suffered, an office to which all the better feelings of our nature tend, offices and duties in which eternity may well be spent with happiness ever growing greater and greater, as the illimitable future opens upon us.

Of the happiness to be derived from frequent personal intercourse with our Saviour, and of the glory from admittance to the inconceivable glories that surround the throne of God, it is no part of this paper to speak; the object being to define what we may learn from the Bible, not to stretch the imagination into regions where we have no similitudes to guide, and no revelation to inform us. The inane follies of spiritualism have shown how utterly impotent the imagination of man is when leaving the guidance of God's word, as written in nature, and in our Bible.

E. X.

THE HOLY CITY.

"And the Lamb is the light thereof."
REV. 21:23.

THAT is, the Lamb is the light of the holy city, the New Jerusalem. To hear many talk, you would think the great thing about heaven is its pleasure. I have heard persons of different denominations talk about heaven, and the Lamb did not even find a place on the background of their descriptions. It was a world of pleasure—a world of perfect and eternal safety, and little more. But a mere world of pleasure deserves not the name of heaven.

Digitized by Google

Ah, such descriptions of Heaven, made by whomsoever they may, are little better than Mohammedan. The truth is, as Christ is the great all and in all of the Bible, so is he of Heaven. A heaven without Christ in it, is not worth having.

The whole verse reads, "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it." I have often thought of the language used in the preface to Revelation: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." (Rev. 1:3.) The Spirit of Inspiration uses no such language with reference to any other book. It pronounces a blessing on the reader, hearer, and doer. It appears that we cannot frequently read or hear read the words of this book without being blessed. The book has so much of the spirit of heaven that it seems we cannot even frequently hear it read without catching something of the spirit of that holy place. I know of nothing that is so heavenly—so soul enrapturing—as portions of this holy book. There are a great many passages in which there is not only the most touching, impassioned, heart-moving eloquence, but it is heavenly. There is nothing earthly about it. We seem to be brought near the throne, to be listening to their songs, and witnessing their heartfelt joys. Yet there is no book in the Bible that is so dark and mysterious—no book which is so little understood—no book the reading of which is so unpopular. This may be the reason why it is so little read. Many would seem to doubt the words of inspiration (Rev. 1:3), and to pronounce the book unprofitable reading. But if the book is so dark and mysterious, so little understood, why should it be profitable? Whether we can assign a reason or not, we have God's word for it, and that is sufficient.

Perhaps one great reason may be because we are so frequently brought very near the throne; we hear such glowing language, and are introduced into such blissful society, that hard and unfeeling, indeed, must be that heart that does not catch something of the spirit of the society—something of the inspiration of the place. Carefully read the 19th chapter, and I scarcely know what kind of a heart you have if you do not feel like joining with the four and twenty elders, and the four living creatures in saying, "Amen, Alleluia." Or with the great multitude crying, "Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

Or turn to the 7th, 21st and 22d chapters, and the Holy Spirit introduces you into the New Jerusalem, the city of indescribable glories, where even the sun is not needed, or where it grows pale before the unspeakable, the infinite glories of God and the Lamb. "The Lamb is the light of it." In every sense the Lamb is the light of it—in every sense the glory of it. In the most literal and natural sense, as well as in every figurative sense, the Lamb is the light of the New Jerusalem. There are senses in which the Lamb is the light of this and of all worlds. Jesus says, "I am the light of this world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12.) There is no doubt, but the word is usually to be interpreted figuratively; so I repeat it, in every figurative, and in every possible sense, Jesus is the light of the city of our God.

No one will doubt that He is figuratively, but is He literally the light of the Holy City? We read in the context, "And the city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it." By the sun and the moon here, we are to understand the sun and moon naturally and literally. The plain import of the language is, that the city will have no need of these natural sources of light. Why no need? The reason assigned is, "For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." His outshining glory will be light enough. The city does not, and will not, need any other source of light. All suns, moons, and stars might be blotted out of existence, but the light of the Holy City would not in the least be dimmed. I use the terms effulgence and effulgent because I can think of no better word. They mean shining out, diffusing a flood of light. There is, and there will be, a light and

Digitized by Google

glory encircling the Lamb whose brightness does and will outshine the sun, and yet to immortal eyes it will not dazzle—it will not in the least be painful or unpleasant. Mere mortal eyes would be unable to endure it. Before the full radiance of Jehovah's glory they would faint away—not merely become as dead men, but be dead. God told Moses that no man could see his face and live. (Ex. 33 : 20.) Paul says of Him, that no one hath seen Him, nor can see Him. (1 Tim. 6 : 16.) The opinion seems to have been common among the Jews, that the glory of God was too great to be looked upon by mere mortal eyes.

This light is also as constant as it is effulgent and glorious. Hence we read, "And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign forever and ever." (Rev. 22 : 5.) There is such glory encircling the Lord God that it causes light surpassing the brightness of the sun, and so constant that there can be no night there. It is not a mere figure of speech which Isaiah uses when he says, "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously." (Is. 24 : 23.) The full radiance of His glory will eclipse and put to shame those great created lights. We learn that the earth was lightened by the unveiled glory of even an angel. (Rev. 18 : 1.) When a little of the glory of the Lord was permitted to shine on the plains of Bethlehem, the shepherds were sore afraid. (Luke 2 : 9.) When a little of that glory appeared on Mount Sinai, "the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the Mount in the eyes of the children of Israel." (Ex. 24 : 17.)

We have said there will a glory encircle the Lamb which will outshine the sun, but have we any evidence that such is now the fact—that there is any such glory encircling the Holy One? The Psalmist says, "O Lord, my God, Thou art very great, Thou art clothed with honor and majesty. *Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment*" (Ps. 104 : 1, 2.) Paul, speaking of our Lord Jeus Christ, the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lords of lords, says, "Who only hath immortality *dwelling in light*, which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see; to whom be glory and power everlasting. Amen." (1. Tim. 6 : 16.) It may be rendered, dwelling in, or inhabiting unapproachable light. That is, mere mortals cannot approach it.

Such passages informs us that our adorable Redeemer is encircled with light or glory, as with a garment; and such is its effulgence that mere mortals cannot look upon it or approach it. When Jesus appeared to John on Patmos in a part of His glory, He fell at His feet as dead. (Rev. 1 : 17.) Had John not been in the ecstatic state, expressed in the original by "epneumati," and had the full glory of Jehovah Jesus been displayed, doubtless he would have fallen dead. So Ezekiel, though in the ecstatic state, at the appearance of some of the glory of God, fell on his face. (Ezek. 1 : 2; 3 : 23.) So also we have mention of others falling prostrate.

When our Saviour was transfigured, there was seen a little of the glory with which He is now arrayed, and it is said, "*His face did shine as the sun;* and His raiment was as white as the light." (Matt. 17 : 2; Mar. 9 : 3.) According to 2 Pet. 1 : 16, it is evident that in the transfiguration, the apostles had a representation of what the power and coming of the Lord Jesus will be. They then saw something of the glory with which He will be arrayed, when He will come in His glory. If, while in His mortal state on the mount—if while in His state of humiliation, He was so clothed with glory that His face shone as the sun, and His raiment was as white as the light, how must that face be clothed with glory now, and how will it shine in the New Jerusalem, in the company of the glorified? May we not suppose that there it will exceed the sun—that then all created lights will grow pale before His effulgent glory? When John saw Jesus on Patmos, "*His countenance was as the sun shineth in His strength.*" (Rev. 1 : 16.) It was not as the shining of the rising or setting sun, but as the cloudless, noonday sun. So when

Digitized by Google

it is said of the King eternal, that no one hath seen Him, nor can see Him, it is evident, that He is too glorious for mere mortal sight. Man cannot look at the unclouded noonday sun, how much less on Him, whose outshining glory exceeds the sun shining in His strength. From these and other passages, it seems evident that the New Jerusalem, with Jesus in it, will not need the light of sun, moon, or stars. His glory will outshine the sun, and it will be so constant that "there shall be no night there." It does not say there will be no sun nor moon. According to various passages, I believe both will then exist—both will then shine with much more than their present splendor, but their light will not be needed in the New Jerusalem. Artificial lights are not needed in the cloudless noon, so those bright, created lights will not be needed, and like a candle at noon, will grow pale. The candle gives as much light at noon as at midnight, but its light dwindles into insignificance, and is lost amid the full glory of the sun, so it will be with the sun itself before the full glory of the Lord. I believe the sun will shine, and will be needed in the new earth, but not in the New Jerusalem. And whether the sun or the moon shine in the city or not, there will be no night there. Such is the effulgent glory of the Lamb, that there can be no night, and there can be no darkness there. The Divinity, the Godhead is expressed by God, and the Lord God; and by the Lamb is, doubtless, expressed the humanity of Jesus. It seems that the very humanity of Jesus is encircled by a glory outshining the sun. When transfigured on the mount, His face shone as the sun, but now in His full glory, it outshines the sun. Oh, what a glorification of humanity! As is the Head, such will his followers be! Angels are so crowned with glory, that when one of them appeared in some of His glory, the earth was lightened by it; but encircling none of them, is there such glory as is to be seen in our glorified Jesus—our Emanuel. Thus in glorified humanity there will be an excelling of glory. Oh, how is our nature glorified and exalted in and by Jesus! But will humanity be thus exalted—thus glorified in the redeemed? Yes, thus, but I do not say equally. May humanity in us be so glorified that it will even exceed the glory of the angels? Yes, doubtless. May our glory so shine out as to afford a light like the Son of God? Undoubtedly. If we are admitted into the royal family of the heavens, we are to be made like the Son of God in all things. The distinguishing difference between us and God, and, doubtless, it is the only distinguishing difference, will be that in every sense we will lack infinity. But the body of our humiliation is to be fashioned like to the body of His glory. Phil. 3: 21, original. "*Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of our Father.* Who hath ears to hear let him hear." (Matt. 13: 43.) Examine the original as closely as we may, and we find it is just as Jesus says: they "shall shine forth, or shine out as the sun." "They that be wise *shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.*" (Dan. 12: 3.) Our blessed Saviour said in His prayer, "*The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them.*" (John 17: 22.) If so, in the kingdom of our Father, that glory will shine out as the sun. John says, "It doth not appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." (1 John 3: 2.) Paul tells us, "That as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. 15: 49.) That is, as we have borne the image of the earthy or first Adam, so we shall bear the image of the heavenly or second Adam. And when we shall fully appear in that image, "we shall be like Him." We shall be glorious as He is glorious. The New Jerusalem will be full of phosphers—light-bearers.

There is a great deal of evidence that man in his original innocence was clothed with light as with a garment. Though destitute of raiment, He was not really naked, but was clothed with light. When He fell, that vesture of light was lost, and lo, He was really naked. He was even more naked than the beasts by which He was surrounded. A late, learned, talented and pious author speaking of man being made in the likeness of God, says, "God

Digitized by Google

clothes himself with light, and as man was made after His likeness, we reasonably conclude that He clothed our first parents in the garb of light. Without this dress they would have been imperfect in appearance, and unlike Him. When they sinned against God, this feature of their likeness to their Creator was removed. When they perceived that, and saw clearly that they were naked, they were afraid and ashamed, and sought to hide themselves from God among the trees of the garden; and also sought to cover their shame from themselves by making girdles of fig leaves." If man in his original state was clothed with light, then in his glorified state he will be thus clothed, for it will be a restored state. Christ will restore what we have lost in Adam, "Encircled with light, and with glory enshrouded."

As Christ in His transfiguration showed His apostles something of what He now is in glory, and what He will be when He comes again, so there have been very holy persons, who at times, when they have had very great nearness to God, have had a little of the outshining of the lost glory and light. Of Moses, who had long communed with God on the mount, we are told, "And it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put a vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with Him." (Ex. 34: 29, 30, 35.) We also learn that the face of Moses shone so brightly that the children of Israel could not look upon him. (2 Cor. 3: 7.) Perhaps it may have been something like trying to look upon the sun at noon. It was said the face of Stephen was as if the face of an angel. (Acts 6: 15.) Even in our own times there have been many instances in which the lost glory, or something like it, has been seen. They have usually been transient flashes, outshinings of the lost light; flashes of that which by and by shall be permanent and eternal. Reader, along with our glorified Redeemer, shall that glory be your glory? If in heart and life you are like Him, you will have eternal glory like His; but you must have heart-likeness to Christ here, in order to have His glorified and eternal likeness hereafter. If you have the one, you will have the other, but cannot have the one without the other. If you have heart holiness, then the glory of Christ, or such as His, will be revealed in you; but if you are a rejecter of Christ, you cannot appear with Him in glory. Where then will you appear, and how?

If you do not appear with Christ, you will with Satan. You will appear like him, and like him, be divested of all glory. Like him you will be dark bodies—the blackness of darkness itself. If you bear the image of Satan here—if you have his heart-likeness, you must in every sense be like him there. He has lost all the light and glory which he once had, and to him it is lost forever. Oh, take heed how you treat Jesus, lest your glory may soon be lost forever.

Contrast that holy city which is full of glory, so full that it is all lighted with glory, with that world which is the blackness of darkness; and do you not pay too dear for any form of sin, if, in gaining it, you lose that blest city, and go where darkness reigns?

HOW LONG.

As a lone watcher by the couch of anguish
  Longs for the dawning of another day,
Hoping its light will show that the dear sufferer
  Has passed the crisis and may live to pray:

So does the sad heart long for Thine appearing,
  O Christ, and moans with an unceasing moan;
Thy children moan, and earth's deep lamentation
  Is echoed by the cry around Thy throne.

"How long, O Lord," and it is still the cry
  Of Thy redeemed through all the lingering night.
O that to-morrow's dawn may bring the day
  When Thou supreme shalt reign by thine own might.

NEWARK, N. J.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

THE MYSTERY OF CREATION.

BY REV. L. C. BAKER.

It was, from the beginning, in anticipation that God was, in a most marvellous way, to show forth His glory in creation and make a full unfolding on its platform of all the attributes of His inexhaustible being. To this end creation, proceeding from Him, was to be brought into marvellous accord with Him through the creation of a new order of being, differing from angels, linked to the world of matter, subject to its limitations and liabilities, and yet made in the image of Himself and so linked to God. The mystery of evil was to be allowed to do its work in this new realm and upon this new creature of His hand that, in the discipline of conflict with it, he might gain a wider experience and be prepared for his high destiny. Satan was suffered to impose his yoke of bondage to corruption upon the neck of the creation which God had made, and upon man placed upon its summit. But the promise was, that the mystery of evil should be rebuked and disclosed by the revelation of a greater mystery of godliness, by which the fallen sons of men, redeemed from sin and death, should be made the appropriate and efficient instruments of showing forth the glory and the grace of God in the ages to come, and over the field of creation to be disenthralled at their manifestation. This plan, therefore, required that some sheltered nook in the universe should be made ready for the introduction and abode of this new creature, man. A planet in this solar system out of innumerable systems was designated. The earth was chosen on which the mighty Powers before referred to, which men call the powers of nature, have wrought to produce a settled order, such as we do not see elsewhere. No other planet of this system, and certainly no one of those furnaces of blazing fire we call fixed stars, presents such an aspect of chemical equilibrium and cosmical order as we find here, where sun and moon and stars of light, fire and hail, snow and vapors, stormy wind, mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars, unite not only in praising God, but in sustaining and blessing man. Man then was placed here, the crowning work in the whole series of the works of God, the monarch of creation; the earth the most perfect work yet cast up from the depths of this seething sea of fire, and man upon it, the pearl of great price, which even the Lord of glory came to seek and find.

And how did He come? He was made flesh, and dwelt among us. He took upon Him our nature, and entered wholly into the sphere of this human life of suffering and conflict. He carried our nature triumphantly through all; paid down the wages of its sin, which is death, that, through death, He might destroy him that hath the power of it; and carried it through resurrection on to the pinnacle of power and of glory. God, in the person of His Son, has thus taken man into perpetual union with Himself, and crowned him king of this dominion. And, in lifting up man to His throne, He is lifting up the whole system, of which man was made the head, out of its transient eclipse, into the eternal order and beauty of that new creation, in which the glory of our Father God, which we now see through the veil of things temporal and through a glass darkly, shall be revealed to us face to face and heart to heart. His Son, who made all things, as Jesus the Incarnate Word, once dead, but now alive forevermore, is the appointed Heir of all things. The First-Begotten of the Father from eternity, in the new relation and order of being, He is now the First Begotten from the dead, whom, when the Father raised, He declared to be his Son, and commanded all the angels of God to worship, giving Him lordship over all kindreds of the earth, and all the hosts and realms of heaven. And this, His passage through humiliation and death to this glory, was that He might become the First-Born among many brethren. It was to bring many sons unto glory. So that we are brought face to face with the amazing, the unspeakable wonder,

Digitized by Google

that this mighty work of creation was begun, and has been carried on, and this earth was selected and fitted up, that, through conflict and triumph over evil, there might be born and trained here that anointed race who should be let into the deepest secrets of the mind and heart of God, who should be in the highest and most sacred and endearing sense, His sons, the heirs of His estate, and the prime ministers in the coming administrations of His kingdom, that shall flood the wide fields of space with a brighter effulgence of His glory than that which sparkles from suns and stars. Man, in resurrection glory, linked by embodied being to the material world, and yet in origin and by new creation made one with God, shall be the golden bond in that heavenly marriage of the future when the whole creation, like a beauteous bride, shall stand suffused with the light and radiant with the loveliness of God.

We have no sympathy, then, with those dwarfed conceptions of the ways of God in creation and redemption which make man to be a miserable, solitary rebel in a remote and insignificant corner of one of His provinces, whom it were a pity to let perish without a great effort to rescue. That he is a sinner is, alas! too plain. That he has passed under the power of death is sorrowfully true. That he is, in the sight of God, insignificant, is also true in one aspect; in another, he is the pivot around which turns the whole plan of creation, as it has been unfolding in the ages past, and sweeps away into the ages to come. He is nothing in himself; but the good pleasure of God has made much of him. He will never achieve his destined greatness, except, as in union with the risen Jesus, he shall rise into the rank of excellent being which he has attained. Many will not enter in through unbelief; but a royal seed shall not fail to come to the same joy and honor, who shall inherit all things, and be kings and priests unto God forever.

The discoveries of science then, in these last days, instead of disproving to the devout believer the Gospel on which all his hopes are based, have only disclosed to him sublimer views of the wisdom and grace that stooped to his low estate. They have uncovered depths before hidden, and lifted him on to splendid heights in the knowledge of the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord—the one theme which he shall explore with delight forever, but never exhaust; for it filleth to all the fulness of God. They have immeasurably enlarged our conception of the works of Him who has taught us to call Him Father, and given us views of His eternal Being and wisdom and power of appalling magnificence. But they all tend to magnify the riches of that grace which has let itself down to us, that it might lift us up forever.

Welcome, then, the most advanced teachings of all true science. They let us more into the mystery of the love of God in our salvation. The doctrine of the Word made flesh gives us who believe the key that unlocks the arcana of the universe. We see the plan by which the worlds were framed. This sublime masonry of suns and stars is crowned on its summit with a cross; and on that cross a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The structure is not too grand and costly for such an altar. And on the platform, where stands that cross, and around its base, there is being gathered that royal company who are to be kings and priests in this temple of the skies, which the glory of God and of the Lamb shall lighten. A few short graphic strokes of St. John's inspired pen sketch out this plan of ages, which the wisdom of this world could never find out, which its princes did not know, else they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. "In the beginning was the Word. . . . And the Word was God. . . . All things were made by Him. . . . The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. . . . To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." This is His manner of love to us, he writes in another place, that we are now the sons of God; although it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but when this mantling veil of things visible is rent, and His glory is revealed, we shall be like Him and appear with Him in glory.

In the light of these reflections, the importance of that cardinal doctrine of our faith, the resurrection of the dead, is apparent. There

Digitized by Google

are many fascinating speculations nowadays that etherealize into emptiness the grand verities of revelation, making embodied life to be the lowest form of life, and affirming virtually that there is no resurrection of the dead. But the doctrine of God our Saviour affirms that the highest form of life and being has been embodied. The whole drift and energetic action of creation has been toward the production of a creature that should be fashioned out of its materials into an image of God. The first Adam, of the earth earthy, was made such an image. Sin and Satan were suffered to pollute and deface the image for a while; but only in order to its reconstruction after a perfect model in Him who, as the Risen Man, is now the Image of the Invisible God, the First-Born of every creature. The Second Adam is the Lord from heaven. It would seem as if God Himself would take on a form, not indeed to enhance His own happiness, but that He might communicate of His ineffable fulness to His creatures. The Word was made flesh, died for our sins, and was raised again in the power of an endless life, the Type and Fount of pure and indestructible manhood, set in the highest heavens, the model and the goal to which He would bring us. The being clothed upon, then, with this glorified humanity at the resurrection, is as essential to this plan of ages as is the keystone to an arch. The stock of this human family is the noblest tree that has blossomed out on the field of the universe, the grains in whose soil are stars; and that stock has yet ripened but one fruit, one Risen Man, the corn of wheat that fell into the ground and died and rose again, the germ of springing harvests that shall make this wide field glad with golden sheaves, and vocal before God with perpetual joy. It is this embodied immortality, this incorruptible manhood that bears the stamp of God's own image, to the production of which He has been working through all the ages, for whose manifestation the whole creation now waits as an expectant mother travailing to bring to light the kingly race whose birth shall be her rest and joy. And through this race, not of disembodied spirits, but of men, who come to their immortal manhood at the redemption of their bodies, shall the designs of God in creation be unrolled in the ages to come.

WHAT TIME IS IT?

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."—Rom. 13 : 12.

These words ought to come home to our consciences like the blast of a trumpet. They ought to rouse our sleeping minds to a sense of the eternal realities which are before us. They call upon us to lay aside all trifling, lingering, and carelessness about our Christianity. They summon us to a close walk with God.

I. You have here *the present condition of the world*,—It is night.

II. You have *the condition of the world which is yet to come*,—It will be day.

III. You have *the particular time in which our lot is cast*,—The night is far spent, and the day is at hand.

IV. You have *the duty of all believers who know the time*,—They ought to cast off the works of darkness, and to put on the armor of light.

Upon each of these four points I have something to say.

I. First of all let us consider the present condition of the world.

The Apostle Paul calls it "night." "The night," he says, "is far spent."

I have no doubt that word seems strange to some persons. They think it wonderful that the year 1871 should be called "night." They are living in days of learning, science, civilization, commerce, freedom, and knowledge. They see around them things which their forefathers never dreamed of,—railways, manufactories, gas, electricity, steam-engines, education for all, and cheap books. I know it all, and am thankful for it. Nevertheless I say that in the things of God the world is still in a state of "night." I believe that God looks down on this globe of ours as it rolls round the sun, and as He looks upon it, He pronounces it "very dark." I believe that the angels go to and fro, and make report of all they see on our earth, and their constant report is, "very dark." And

Digitized by Google

I am sure that believers in the Lord Jesus in every land are of one mind on this subject. They cry and sigh for the abominations they see around them. To them the world appears "very dark."

Is it not dark *in heathen lands?* There are two-thirds of the whole world in open rebellion against God and His Christ. Two out of every three inhabitants of the globe have no Bible, no Gospel, no knowledge, no faith, no hope. They are cruel, deceitful, immoral, unclean, earthly, sensual, devilish, idolatrous, superstitious. Surely that is night.

Is it not dark *in many professedly Christian countries?* There are two-thirds of all the professing Christians on earth who are unsound in the faith. Their religion is not simply Scriptural. They have added to it many things which are not to be found in the Bible. They have left out of it many things which the Bible has plainly commanded. There are millions who give honor to the Virgin Mary and dead saints instead of Christ. There are millions of baptized people who know nothing of the Bible, and have not the slightest idea of the salvation contained in the Gospel. Surely that is night.

Is it not dark in *our own country* at this present day? How much of sin there is in Protestant Britain and America, and how little of God! How much of open infidelity, heathenish ignorance, drunkenness, irreligion, swearing, cheating, lying, covetousness, is weekly crying against us before the Lord of Hosts! How many people go to no place of worship at all! How many go to church merely as a matter of form! How few are really in earnest about the salvation of their souls! How few have any evidence to show of a saving faith in Christ, and a real work of the Spirit in their hearts! Surely even among ourselves it is night.

Is there not *much darkness under the eyes of every true believer?* Go to the most godly, quiet, and orderly parish in our land at this moment. Ask any well-informed child of God residing in it, how many true Christians it contains, and what is the proportion of the converted to the unconverted. Mark well the answer he will give. I doubt if you will find a parish where one-third of the people are converted. And if such be the report of parishes which are like the green tree, what must be the state of things in the dry? Surely it is night.

Reader, it is useless to deny these things. Humbling as it may be to the pride of human nature, the word of the Apostle is strictly true, —*the time present is night.* An unconverted man may not perceive it. A graceless man may not comprehend it. The blind eye sees no difference between noon and midnight. The deaf ear makes no distinction between discord and sweet music. The mortified limb has no feeling either of heat or cold. But I do believe that God's children can enter into the meaning of the expression. The people of the Lord Jesus Christ find by experience that it is night.

It is a *cold time* to believers. They meet with much to chill and damp their zeal, and little to cheer and warm their hearts. They have to put up with many crosses and disappointments. They see iniquity abounding, and their own love is apt to become cold. And why? It is night.

It is a *lonely time* to believers. They find little company on the way that leads to heaven. Here and there they fall in with one who loves the Lord Jesus, and lives by faith. A few of God's children may be found in one town and a few in another. But on the whole the children of the world seem like the Syrian army, which filled the country, and the children of God are like a few scattered sheep in a wilderness. And why? It is night.

It is a *dangerous time* to believers. They often stumble, and scarcely discern their path. They often stand in doubt, and know not which way to turn. They sometimes see not their tokens, and lose sight of their landmarks. At best they travel on in continual fear of enemies. And why? It is night.

Reader, I ask you to ponder these things. If time present be night, you will not wonder if we ministers warn Christians to watch and pray. You will count it no strange thing if we tell you to live like soldiers in an enemy's country, and to be always on your guard.

Reader, sit down and ask yourself whether you find this world in which you live to be

Digitized by Google

night or day. Is time present a time of conflict or a time of ease? Do you feel that your best things are here in this life, or that your best things are yet to come? I offer these questions to you as a test of your spiritual state. I place them before you as a gauge and measure of your soul's condition. I tell you plainly, if you never found this world a wilderness and place of darkness, it is an evil sign of your state in the sight of God. The true believer will find the words of his crucified Lord to be strictly true, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." (John 16:33.) The true believer, like his Lord and Master, will be made "perfect through sufferings." The true believer will mourn over the world he lives in, as a world in rebellion against its rightful King. Sin will grieve him. Ungodliness will make him heavy of heart. Like Lot in Sodom, his righteous soul will be daily vexed with much that he sees and hears. He will long for the time when the day shall dawn, and the shadows flee away. For the present he will feel it is night.

II. Let us consider, in the second place, the condition of the world which is yet to come. The Apostle Paul calls it "day."

The world we live in is not to go on always as it does now. The darkness of sin, ignorance, and superstition is not always to cover the earth. The sun of righteousness shall one day rise with healing in his wings. The Lord Jesus shall come again with power and great glory. He shall return as a morning without clouds, and then it shall be "day."

There is a time coming when the devil shall be bound, and shall no longer rule in this world. (Rev. 20:1, &c.) Sin and all its consequences shall be cast out. The groaning creation shall at length be refreshed. (Acts 3:19.) The wicked shall be shut up forever in their own place. The saints of the Most High shall at length possess the kingdom. There shall be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein shall dwell righteousness. Surely that will be "day."

There is a time coming when believers shall have joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee far away. Every tear shall be wiped, every cross laid down, every anxiety removed, every bitter cup taken away. Persecution, temptation, sickness, mourning, parting, separation, and death, shall be at end. Surely that will be sunshine. It will be "day."

There is a time coming when the whole family of Christ shall be gathered together. They shall rise from their narrow beds, and each put on a glorious body. They shall awake from their long sleep refreshed, strengthened, and far more beautiful than when they lay down. They shall leave behind them in their graves every imperfection, and meet without spot or wrinkle, to part no more. Surely that will be a joyful morning. It will be "day."

There is a time coming when believers shall no longer see through a glass darkly, but face to face. They shall see as they have been seen, and know as they have been known. They shall cease to wrangle and dispute about outward matters, and shall think of nothing but eternal realities. They shall behold their crucified Lord and Saviour with the eye of sense, and no longer follow Him by faith. They shall see one another free from all corruption, and misunderstand one another's motives and conduct no more. Surely that will be "day."

I see here great comfort for every believer in Christ who reads these pages. *There is a day before you, a glorious day.* You sometimes feel now as if you walked in darkness and had no light. You have often a hard battle to fight with the world, the flesh, and the devil. You sometimes fancy you will never win your way home, and must faint by the way. Your flesh and heart are ready to fail. You are sorely tempted to give up, and to sit down in despair. But take comfort in the thought of things yet to come. There is a good time before you. Your day has yet to dawn.

I see here great reason why many professing Christians should tremble and be afraid. There are many, too many I fear, to whom the time to come will be anything but day. There are many whose happiness is evidently all below, whose treasure is all on earth, whose brightest time is now, and whose gloomiest prospects are hereafter. The further they look on, the darker everything appears. Old age looks dark,—

Digitized by Google

sickness looks darker still,—death and judgment look darkest of all!

Beloved reader, if this be your case, I warn you plainly there must be a change. Your views, your tastes, your inclinations, your affections must be renewed and transformed. You must learn to view the world that now is, and that which is to come, in a very different light. Go and sit at the feet of Jesus, and ask Him to teach you this lesson. Ask for the enlightening Spirit to anoint your eyes that you may see. Ask for the veil to be taken away, that you may behold everything in its true colors.

I know well that Satan labors hard to prevent men thinking of a better world than that in which we now live. He strives to turn away their eyes from the coming day. He would fain persuade them that it is impossible to do their duty in this life, and at the same time to set their affections on things above. He whispers to people that we ministers want them to become gloomy hermits, or fanatical misanthropes, and that if they listen to us they will become unfitted for all the relations of life. Against all suggestions of Satan I warn every reader to be on his guard.

I bid no one neglect the duties of his station, or forsake the post which God has called him to fill. I encourage no one in moroseness and churlishness, as if there was nothing to be thankful for in this world. I praise no one who refuses his affections to those with whom he is united by love, friendship, and relationship. I only ask that the believer in the New Testament should live by a New Testament standard,—that he should look for the coming of the day of God, and wait for the Son of God from heaven, and love his Lord's appearing.

Reader, I abhor all extravagance and fanaticism on the subject of things to come. I have no opinion of any religion which makes a man neglect his business, or cease to love wife, children, relatives, and friends. I only ask that we should take scriptural views of things as they are, and things as they yet will be. I ask that we should see our present evils and mourn over them,—that we should see our future good things and long for them. Let us honestly confess that sin is around us, and long to be delivered from its presence. Let us honestly confess that holiness is one day to spread over the earth, and long for it to come. Let us never be ashamed to allow that it is "night," and that we want it to be "day."

Tell me, can that man really hate sin, who does not desire to see it swept away from the earth? Can that man love holiness who does not long for the time when all shall know the Lord? Can that man be truly united to Christ by faith who does not wish to see Christ, and to be with Him? Can that man be a saint who does not thirst after the unmixed company of just men made perfect? Can that man be in earnest who daily prays, "Thy kingdom come," and yet is content that the world should go on as it is without any change? Oh! no! no! These things are impossible. God's true children will want to be at home. They will wish for the day.

Reader, if you mean to be saved, you must learn to view time present as "night," and time to come as "day." You must learn to regard the other side of Jordan as the home of your soul, and this side as a desert land. Time present must be your wilderness, your battle-field, your place of trial,—time to come must be your Canaan, your rest, your Father's house,—or else you had better never have been born.

III. In the third place, let us consider the particular times in which our lot is cast.

The Apostle Paul tells us, when he says, "The night is far spent, and the day is at hand." I believe these words mean that the last order of things has arrived,—the last stage in the history of the Church has come. The law and the prophets have done their work. The Messiah promised at the fall has appeared, and provided a complete salvation. The last revelation of God's will has been made. The way of life has been laid open to all mankind. No further message from heaven to earth is to be expected before the end. No more books of Scripture are to be written. We have reached the last watch of the night. We have nothing to expect now but the sunrise and the morning.

Reader, these words, which were true eighteen hundred years ago, are, if possible, more true at the present time. They are words which

Digitized by Google

should come home with increasing power to the Church of Christ every year.—"The night is far spent: the day is at hand."

I am one of those who think "the day" may not be so far off as some seem to suppose. I am unable to put away the idea of the Lord's return in glory as an event which "of course" cannot be in our times, as some men say. I rather think I see tokens of the sun being near the horizon. At all events, I desire to keep in special remembrance St. James's words, "The Judge standeth before the door,—the coming of the Lord draweth nigh," and St. Peter's words, "The end of all things is at hand." (James 5 : 8, 9; 1 Peter 4 : 7.)

I am no prophet, and may easily be mistaken. I may die, and you may die, before Christ comes, and the day dawns. But I appeal to every thinking man whether there are not "signs of the times" which deserve serious attention. I ask him to notice the things going on in the world, and to consider well what they are intended to teach.

Does any reader ask what I mean by "signs of the times?" Let him weigh well the six following points, and he will see what I mean.

1. What shall we say to the *missions to the heathen* which have been set on foot in these latter days? Seventy years ago the Protestant Churches seemed thoroughly asleep on the subject of missions. There was hardly a single missionary sent forth to the heathen from the whole of Great Britain. The idea of preaching the Gospel to savages and idolaters was ridiculed. The first promoters of missions were treated coldly by many who ought to have known better. But now the feeling is completely changed. We are employing hundreds of missionaries in every quarter of the globe. And what saith the Scripture, "The Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world *for a witness* unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. 24 : 14.)

2. What shall we say to the surprising *interest taken in the Jewish nation* in these latter days? Seventy years ago to be a Jew was a taunt, and a by-word, and a proverb. No man cared for the souls of the children of Abraham. They were a people despised, and scorned, and trampled under foot. It might truly have been said, "This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after." (Jerem. 30 : 17.) But now the feeling is completely changed. The spiritual interests of Jews are a subject of deep concern to true Christians. The civil rights of Jews are cared for even to an extreme. The very city of Jerusalem has weight in the councils of kings. Yet what saith the Scripture? "Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion, for the time to favor her, yea the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory." (Psalm 102 : 13–16.)

3. What shall we say to the wonderful *spread of knowledge and communication between nations* in these days? Seventy years ago to find a poor man who could read, was rather an uncommon thing. In a few years a man who cannot read will be a rare sight. Seventy years ago there were few who ever travelled beyond the bounds of their own county. Now every one can move in every direction, and our population is like a swarm of bees disturbed. Steam navigation and railways have altered the character of society. Time and space are made nothing of. Seas, mountains, and rivers are no longer obstacles. God separated the nations in the day of Babel. Man is working hard to make them all one again. And what saith the Scripture? "Shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." (Dan. 12 : 4.)

4. What shall we say to the *wars and shakings of nations* which we have seen in these last seventy years? The mightiest empires on earth have been shaken to their very foundations. Kings, and princes, and great men, have been driven from their high position by scores, and been made wanderers on the face of the earth. There has been no accounting for it by any human reasoning. These movements have taken place in the face of increased knowledge, civilization, and desire of peace. The shock came from beneath. And

Digitized by Google

what saith the Scripture? "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." (Matt. 34:7, 8.)

5. What shall we say to the *increased attention to unfulfilled prophecy*, which has appeared in these latter days? Seventy years ago there were few who paid any attention to the subject. The passages in Scripture which speak of things to come were comparatively neglected, or perverted with curious ingenuity from their simple meaning. Now, on the contrary, the current of public feeling runs strongly in favor of prophetical study. Books on the subject are eagerly bought up. Lectures on the subject are listened to with increased attention. And what saith the Scripture? "The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." (Dan. 12:9.) The words seem unfolding. The seal seems breaking. Can the end be far off?

I see in these words the *strongest motives for diligence* in the work of doing good to souls. Let us make more haste to spread the Gospel over the world. Let us take more pains in endeavoring to sow truth at home. Let us labor, if possible, to pluck more brands from the burning. The time is short. The night is far spent. The day is at hand.

I see in these words the *strongest consolation* for the believer in Christ Jesus. Oh! for the heart to lay hold on it more and more!

Yet a little while, and believers shall part forever with *disease*. The sick and wearied ones, who have mourned over their seeming uselessness to the Church,—the weak and infirm, who have had the will to labor, but not the power,—the feeble and bed-ridden, who have waited long-drawn years in quiet chambers, till their eyes know every crack and speck on their walls,—all, all shall be set free. They shall each have a glorious body like their Lord's.

Yet a little while, and mourning believers shall part forever with their *tears*. Every wound in their hearts shall be completely healed. Every empty place and gap in their affections shall be entirely filled up. They shall find that those who have died in the Lord were not lost, but gone before. They shall see that infinite wisdom arranged every bereavement, by which one was taken and another left. They shall magnify the Lord together with those who were once their companions in tribulation, and acknowledge that He did all things well, and led them by a right way.

Yet a little while, and believers shall no more feel that they are *alone*. They shall no longer be scattered over the earth, a few in one place, and a few in another. They shall no longer lament that they see so few to speak to, as a man speaketh with his friend,—so few who are of one mind, and travel with them in the one narrow way. They shall be united to the general assembly and Church of the first-born. They shall join the blessed company of all the believers of every name, and people, and tongue. Their eyes shall at length be satisfied with seeing. They shall see a multitude of saints that none can number, and not one wicked person among them.

Yet a little while, and working believers shall find that their *labor was not in vain*. The ministers who have preached and seemed to reap no fruit,—the missionaries who testified of the Gospel, and none seemed to believe,—the teachers who poured into children's minds line upon line, and none seemed to attend,—all, all shall discover that they have not spent their strength for nought. They shall find that the seed sown can spring up after many days, and that sooner or later in all labor there is profit.

IV. And now, in the last place, let me speak of the particular duty of all believers connected with the truths we have just considered. That practical duty is put before us in plain words, "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."

Reader, I love to observe how closely the doctrine of Christ's second coming and kingdom is bound up with personal holiness. I marvel that any can regard the second advent and reign of the Lord Jesus as merely speculative matters, or denounce them as unprofitable subjects. To my own mind they seem eminently practical, or else I have read my Bible to very little purpose.

Digitized by Google

Does not the Apostle Paul say to the Philippians, "Let your moderation be known unto all men: the Lord is at hand." (Phil. 4:5.) Does he not say to the Colossians, "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth." (Col. 3:2–5.) Does not he bid the Hebrews to "Exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." (Heb. 10:25.) Does not St. Peter say, "We look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace without spot and blameless." (2 Peter 3:13, 14.) These texts appear to me to speak with no uncertain voice. I know not how their force can be evaded. They make the coming of Christ, and the day of glory, an argument for increased holiness. And it is just in the same way that St. Paul says, "Let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."

Reader, how are you to "cast off the works of darkness?" Listen to me and I will tell you. You ought to lay aside everything in your life and habits which will not bear the light of Christ's appearing. You ought to make it a principle of conscience to do nothing you would not like to be found doing when Jesus comes again to gather His people together. This is a searching test indeed. The application of it must be left to every man's own heart. Each must judge for himself. Each must prove his own works. Each must set up an assize within him, and honestly bring his ways to a trial. Oh! for a will to deal fairly and justly with ourselves! Oh! for a daily readiness to judge ourselves that we be not judged of the Lord, and to condemn ourselves that we be not condemned at the last day!

Try all your employment of time by the test of Christ's second coming. Place in this balance your amusements, your books, your companions, your manner of conversation, your daily behavior in all the relations of life. Measure all by this measure,—"The night is far spent and the day is at hand. Am I living as a child of the night, or as one who looks for the day?" Do this, and you will cast off the works of darkness.

But how are you to put on the armor of light? Listen to me once more, and I will tell you. You ought to aim at every grace and habit which becomes a believer in Christ, and a child of God, and a citizen of a heavenly kingdom. You ought not to leave eminent holiness and spirituality to a few, as if none but a few favored ones could be eminent saints. You ought to labor to wear the armor of light yourself, the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of hope, and the sword of the Spirit. (Ephes. 6:14–17.) Wherever you may live, and whatever may be your trials—however great your difficulties, and however small your helps—nothing should prevent your aiming at the highest standard, to behave like one who believes that Christ is coming again.

You should resolve, by God's help, so to live, that the day of Christ shall find you needing as little change as possible. You should seek to have tastes so heavenly—affections so spiritual, —a will so subdued—a mind so unworldly, that when the Lord appears you may be thoroughly in tune for His kingdom. Verily it was a fine saying of Dr. Preston, on his death-bed, "I go to change my place but not my company."

Ah! reader, I fear that some believers will be far less ready for the day of Christ than others. I suspect that some will have a far more abundant entrance into heaven than their brethren—more boldness, more confidence, more felt readiness for the company of their Lord. Oh! that every one into whose hands this address may fall, may so walk with God, that like Enoch he may be only translated from a lower degree of communion to a higher—from walking by faith to walking by sight. This would be putting on the armor of light.

Let there be light in your heart continually; Christ dwelling there by faith,—felt, known, and experienced by your soul. Let there be light in your life continually; Christ reflected there, followed, imitated, and copied. Seek to be a light in the world, and nothing less—a

Digitized by Google

bright light, a clear light, a light that men can see afar off. Do this, and you will put on the armor of light.

Live as if you thought Christ might come at any time. Do everything as if you did it for the last time. Say everything as if you said it for the last time. Read every chapter in the Bible as if you did not know whether you would be allowed to read it again. Pray every prayer as if you felt it might be your last opportunity. Hear every sermon as if you were hearing once and forever. This is the way to be found ready. This is the way to turn Christ's second appearing to good account. This is the way to put on the armor of light.

And now perhaps this address has fallen into the hands of *some careless, thoughtless, unconverted person*. Reader, are you that man? Then, remember these words, "The night is far spent, and the day is at hand."

What are you doing? You eat, you drink, you sleep, you dress, you work, you buy, you sell, you laugh, you read, but you do nothing for your soul. Hell is opening its mouth for you, and you are careless. Christ is coming to judge the world, and you are unprepared. Time hurries on, and you are not ready for eternity. Oh! awake to a sense of your danger, and repent this day. Awake and call upon your God, before it is too late to pray. Awake and seek the Lord Jesus Christ, before the door is shut, and the day of wrath begins. Alas! you may be thought wise and clever in this world, but living as you do you act the part of a madman.

But perhaps this address has fallen into the hands of one who is *undecided and halting between two opinions*. Reader, are you that man? Then remember these words, "The night is far spent, and the day is at hand."

What are you doing? You hear, you listen, you wish, you desire, you mean, you intend, you hope, you resolve, but you go no further. You see the ark, but you will not go in. You see the bread of life, but you do not eat it. You wait. And yet time gets on. The devil is saying over you, "I shall have this soul before long." Oh! come out from the world, and linger no more. Take up the cross. Cast away vain excuses. Confess Christ before men. Beware, I say, lest you make up your mind too late. Again I say, beware.

But perhaps this address has fallen into the hands of some *true believer*. Reader, are you that man? Then remember these words. "The night is far spent, and the day is at hand."

I ask you to live as if you believed the words we have been considering, and to show the world you think them true. The nearer you draw to home, the more wakeful you ought to be. The more you realize the second personal coming of the Lord Jesus, the more lively ought your Christianity to be.

I remember, when I was a schoolboy, I could wake up, however tired with a long journey, when I began to draw near home. Soon as I saw the old hills, and trees, and chimneys, the sense of weariness was gone, and I was all alive. The prospect of soon seeing much loved faces, the joy of thinking of a family gathering, all this was able to drive sleep away. Surely it ought to be the same with us in the matter of our souls. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand. Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come and will not tarry. Then let us cast off every work of darkness. Let us put on the whole armor of light. Let us be ashamed of our past drowsiness. Let us awake, and sleep no more.

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

(From Dr. Cotton Mather's sermon on the death of George I, A.D. 1727.)

THE sacred and ancient prophecies have assigned to our glorious King, Jehovah, Jesus, a kingdom which, upon the destruction of the Roman monarchy, shall fill the whole earth; a kingdom wherein all people shall serve Him, and He shall have an everlasting dominion.

God granted unto his people in the days of Daniel a famous prophecy, that in the days of the four well-known monarchies, or before they should all go through their determined period, He would set up an holy kingdom in the world; and that it should be done without hands, or

Digitized by Google

be a spiritual kingdom; and "cut out of the mountain," or fetched from Heaven, and be of an heavenly original, a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, but shall break in pieces the Roman monarchy, and it shall stand forever. 'Tis added in the prophecy, that the king of this holy kingdom should be the "Son of Man," who is none other than the eternal Son of God, incarnate in our blessed Jesus; who should have given "dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people should serve him," &c.

This kingdom is to see a *twofold state.*

1st. Until the period of the fourth monarchy, even the Roman monarchy in the Papal form of it, it is to be in the state of a "little stone." But 2d, upon that period, it shall be in the state of a "great mountain," which the whole earth shall be filled withal.

While the kingdom is yet in the state of a little stone, the subjects of it lie scattered here and there about the world: a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people of the world, and their laws are diverse from all people. The Spirit of God is by His Gospel all this while gathering subjects, and preparing them to appear and partake in the glories of His kingdom, when it shall arrive to the state of the great mountain, which is to be looked for. We see it accordingly come to pass; this Kingdom of God in the state of a little stone began upon the resurrection of our blessed Jesus from the dead, whereupon he declared "all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth;" and he quickly went up to take possession of it. Our Lord is now "set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens," and He has a number of subjects on the earth, by whom He is obeyed and adored as a King, superior to the greatest kings in the world. There is a kingdom set up, wherein the laws of our blessed Jesus are esteemed paramount to all the laws of any mortal men. Yea, the spirit of piety operating in them sets our Saviour on the throne in their souls, and causes them to say of Him, "Jehovah is our Lord, our Lawgiver, our King, and He will save us."

The kingdom will anon come into the state of a "great mountain," and every individual person that was a loyal subject of the glorious King, while his kingdom here was but as a little stone, shall have an actual share in the *consolations* of the kingdom when it shall be the great mountain. This will be when the Roman and Papal empires shall be broken to pieces, and "become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and the wind so carries them away that no place will be found for them." And that *revolution* then comes on when "the Son of Man comes in the clouds of heaven," and a fiery stream issues and comes forth from before Him, and the world is given to the burning flame.

Then our God will create "new heavens," to be inhabited by His *raised saints*, who will be made "equal to the angels;" and a "new earth," to be inhabited by the *changed ones*, who are "caught up" for awhile to escape the conflagration. Hereupon "the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." And in this *new world* there will be the fulfilling of that word, "The Lord hath prepared His seat in the heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all." (Ps. 103:19.)

Editorial.

THAT FALLING AWAY FIRST.

It is part of the doctrine, for the exposition and defence of which this serial is set, that, from the time of Christ's ascension till this present, and till He comes again, it is the duty and proper attitude of all His true people, to be anticipating and waiting for His return as a thing that may occur, and that ought to be looked for, any day or hour, as the weeks and years and centuries roll on. In other words, we hold that there is no time, in any age of the Church, and especially not in our age, in which

Digitized by Google

Christians are not under the most solemn and direct commands to be awake, watching, and ready for the Saviour's coming, justly expecting Him any moment.

In expressing this doctrine recently, an intelligent and inquiring lady propounded to us what she felt to be a difficulty in the way, and asked how it was to be overcome. She remarked that in 2 Thess. 2: 1–3, the Apostle says, "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." Here he seems to tell the Thessalonians not to expect the coming of Christ until after the manifestation of the great Antichrist, whose spirit did indeed then work, but whose revelation was still hindered, and has not yet fully occurred. How, then, could they, under these apostolic instructions, expect the coming of Christ at any day?

We have found this same objection in other minds, and many doubtless are influenced by it. It seems also to found itself so directly upon the inspired Scriptures that it deserves attention, and requires a solution, if one can be given. For our own part, we feel no embarrassment from it, and are quite clear in the conviction that what the Apostle really says, when taken in its connections, so far from presenting an objection to our doctrine, really confirms and establishes it.

I. Let it be noted, in the first place, that there are two expressions used by the Apostle, which must not be confounded with each other. In the first verse he speaks of "*the coming of our Lord Jesus*," but in the verse which originates this supposed difficulty, he is speaking of "*the day of Christ.*" The objection raised founds itself upon the taking of these two expressions as identical in import. This is a mistake. In a general way, the Scriptures sometimes speak of Christ's coming as the day of the Lord, and of the day of the Lord as the time of Christ's coming; but the two expressions, more strictly viewed, are quite distinct in meaning, and refer to things diverse in kind and in time.

The word παρουσια, not improperly rendered *coming*, means simply *presence, the being or becoming present*, nothing more. It may be a manifested presence, or a presence unheralded, concealed, and generally unknown. In either case the full meaning of the word is realized. It is also true that when Christ becomes present again, in the sense in which He is now absent, the world will have reached the dawn of "the day of the Lord." But the main stress of the expression "*day of the Lord*," whilst it includes the idea of the Saviour's presence or παρουσια, falls more particularly upon the manifestation or revelation, επιφανεια or αποκαλυχις of that presence, in which He reveals Himself to the guilty world as its Judge and Punisher. The Lord must have come, *be present*, in order to an επιφανεια or an αποκαλυχις, but the presence does not necessarily embrace or imply said manifestation or revelation. The stress of the παρουσια or *coming*, therefore, falls upon one thing, and the main stress which the Scriptures lay upon "the day of the Lord" has more particular reference to the *manifestation* or *revelation* of that presence, when "every eye shall see Him," and earth's guilty tribes shall wail because of Him. The truth of this distinction is indicated by what the Apostle connects with the two phrases. With the simple "coming" or *presence* of the Lord Jesus, he associates "our gathering together unto Him;" and with the "day of Christ" He associates the επιφανεια της παρουσιας αίτος—"*the manifestation of His presence*"—and the judgment of the man of sin. The presence is first; the manifestation of that presence in the judgment upon the Antichrist, which is the fulness and very meridian of the day of the Lord, is afterward. It is quite possible and consistent, therefore, for Christians hourly to expect the coming of the Lord in the sense of παρουσια, when they are to be gathered together unto Him, whilst yet assured that the day of His revelation in flaming fire to destroy the wicked would not occur until a susequent period.

II. Let it be noted, in the second place, that there is in this passage one of those very few errors which our admirable translators, through misconception, have made. It would seem, from the English text, as if these Thessalonians

Digitized by Google

had fallen into an unfortunate mistake in being led to expect that the coming of the Lord was at hand, and as if this Epistle had been written to correct this, and to assure them that the coming of the Lord was not to be looked for as thus impending. But this is not the case; otherwise one epistle directly contradicts the other. The point which this second Epistle was intended to set right, was not that the Thessalonians were too ardent and enthusiastic in their anticipations of the near coming of the Saviour to gather them to Himself, but that they were being told that "the day of Christ" *had already come*, whilst yet all their fond hopes remained unfulfilled. Hence the word: "Be ye not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ (ενεστηκε) *is present—arrived—now already here.*" This is unquestionably the sense of ενεστηκε. Schweighaeuser, the lexicographer, gives it this sense, and no other sense. If it means "*at hand*" at all, it means it, not in the sense of *impending, about to come*, but in the sense of *being already present, having already come, now existing*, and no longer a thing of the future. Our translators invariably so render it in all other places. Five times they translate it "*present*," in the sense of *already come*. The phrase, "*at hand*," is used at twenty other places in the New Testament, but in no instance is the original word the one here employed, though the idea is always that of *imminent, near*, but not yet quite arrived. The Syriac, the oldest translation of the New Testament ever made, has *is come*, in the place of the English, *is at hand*. The Swiss version renders it, *est arriv, is here*. McKnight translates it, *hath come*. Luther renders it *vorhanden sei, to be present, to exist at the time*. Olshausen says it denotes "*what is present.*" Bengel says it means *present*. Alford says it is used "always in the sense of *being present*," as distinguished from what is still to come. Dr. Lillie says, that, as far as he can trace, either in classic or Hellenistic Greek, the word here used by the Apostle is never predicated of that which, however near, is still future, but "invariably denotes *actual presence.*" And when we consider how uniform the teaching of the Apostles was, and of the Holy Ghost in all ages has been, that the coming of the Lord *is at hand*, and is ever so to be regarded by Christians, we may very well agree with Alford, that it is simply impossible that the true sense of this text should be, that these Thessalonians were forbidden to expect the return of Christ in their day.

Looking at the preceding epistle, and at the manner in which the doctrine of the second coming, and of the relation of the saints to that coming, is handled in both, it is out of the question to believe that these people were disturbed and alarmed at the idea of the imminent nearness of that coming. It was part of their religion, and entered into their very conversion from heathenism, that they eagerly looked for that coming, and rested all their hopes upon it. It was the chief joy of their hearts, that their dear Lord was presently to return and take them to Himself. They anticipated only the sublimest blessings from that coming. How, then, could they be *shaken in mind* and *alarmed* at the idea that the joyously expected advent was instantaneously imminent? All the circumstances go to prove that nothing could have pleased them more than to be assured that such was verily the case. No, no; the trouble was of an exactly opposite kind. They were in some manner told, and made to believe, that the advent they so much desired *had already occurred;* that the resurrection of the saints was "past already;" that the day of the Lord was then on hand, present, and upon them; and that the time for all, on which they had set their hearts, had arrived; whilst yet the blessings for which they so fondly hoped had not come to them. As when the first Epistle was written, they were disturbed and sorrowing over their friends who had died, as perchance deprived of the joy they expected on the Lord's return; so here we behold them filled with perturbation and alarm over themselves, as though that day had come, and left them nothing to expect but to be judged with the wicked. So Chrysostom expounds the passage, representing that they were falsely being persuaded that all the great

Digitized by Google

and glorious things promised had already received their accomplishment, and that there remained nothing further for them but fearful retribution. So the Greek fathers in general say, apprehending the precise trouble to be, not that the coming of the Lord was regarded as *so near*, but that it was regarded as *already present*, without having brought the fulfilment of the hopes they connected with it.

It also added to the plausibility of this disturbing falsehood that these people were at the time in great distress and suffering. They knew that the Day of the Lord was to be a day of trouble and calamity,—a day of darkness and great tribulation,—and as they were just now in the midst of persecution and perils, they were the more readily impressed with the idea that the Day of the Lord was verily upon them. They knew, also, that when the judgments of the Day of the Lord began to fall, the time for the gathering of the saints to the Lord in the air was past; and just in proportion as they believed that that day had come, in that same proportion would they necessarily be filled with hopeless despondency and the horrors of despair. By all that was precious in their religion, therefore, and with all the authoritative positiveness of an inspired apostle, Paul beseeches and commands them not to believe, and not for a moment to give place to the thought that the Day of the Lord was *already present*, but to continue to hope and wait on the same as they had ever done, sure that Christ would not disappoint them.

III. Note still further the precise argument which the Apostle introduces to assure them that what they had been falsely taught, and what had so unnecessarily troubled them, could not possibly be true. As Alford observes, these people were being led to believe that the day of grace had closed. This is what they associated with the presence of the Day of the Lord. They considered that day particularly as *doomsday*, or the day of Christ's revelation in flaming fire to take vengeance upon them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of His Son; the day in and after which there was no more opportunity of securing a place with the saints. It is this particular conception of "the Day of Christ" with which the Apostle undertakes to deal. And to prove to them that things had not yet come to such a stage, and that that day, so conceived, had not yet come, he proceeds to expound to them the fact that a certain heading up, embodiment, and manifestation of apostasy, evil, and antagonism to God, of which they had been informed, must needs come first, and that that day of which they were thinking as having arrived would only come when the Antichrist is finally overwhelmed. The spirit of this Antichrist, the mystery of iniquity, did then already work. Of this they had been taught. The chances also were that it would very quickly run to its maturity and full revelation. But as yet it was *hindered;* and they knew what it was that hindered. That Hinderer we take to be Christ himself, or the Holy Ghost, in His saints or Church on earth. That Hinderer had to be taken away before the Man of Sin could be fully revealed. The taking away of the saints, or Church, at the παρουσια of the Saviour, would in that case be the removal of the Hinderer; and so the full revelation of the Antichrist, at whose destruction only the Day of the Lord fully comes, is not to take place till after the saints have been gathered together unto their Saviour in the heavens. But, whatever the particular Hinderer may be, Paul says that these people knew what it was; that it then was present and operative; that, while it remained, Antichrist could not be fully revealed; that, whilst Antichrist was not fully revealed, the Day of the Lord, as they were contemplating it, could not come: and that hence it was false, and not to be believed for one moment, that they had already reached that period in which there was nothing remaining to them but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.

This argument was thoroughly conclusive against the false teaching which had entangled and disturbed the peace of this people; and it at the same time quickened their waiting expectancy of their Lord's παρουσια to receive them to Himself. Considering that the day of the Lord's revelation to judgment only comes when the Antichrist is fully revealed, they could no longer believe that that day had already

Digitized by Google

come, as they had feared. Considering that the presence of the Church in the world, with its varied gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, is that which hinders the full revelation of the Antichrist, and that the Church still continued, they were still further certified that the day supposed to be present was really yet future. And considering that the taking away or rapture of the Church was to be the signal for the revelation of the Antichrist, the spirit of which was then already working, and that nothing of which they had any knowledge remained to come between them and this taking up of the waiting saints, not only was their disturbing apprehension effectually set aside, but they received fresh incitement to keep their lamps trimmed and burning, and to wait with eager earnestness day by day for that promised coming of their Lord anterior to the revelation of the Antichrist, when they, with all Christ's waiting ones, should be gathered together unto Him.

From this induction of the facts in the case, it is abundantly manifest that there is nothing whatever in this passage of Holy Scripture, rightly apprehended, which militates in the slightest against our doctrine, but contributes much to illustrate and confirm it. We do not say that it is the duty of Christians to be waiting for "the Day of the Lord;" for that is the day of the revelation of Christ as the Judge of the world and the destroyer of Antichrist and his confederates. When that day comes all true Christians will already be with their Redeemer, to be revealed with Him as copartners in the wonderful administration. What we say is, that it is the duty of Christians to be waiting for Christ's *παρουσια*—for that presence of His, unrevealed to the careless and unbelieving world, when His commands shall issue to recall from their graves those who sleep in Him, and those of His waiting ones who are alive and remaining, "shall be caught up together with them," out of the wicked world, to meet Him in the air, and to be with Him forever. Before the one there must come a falling away first, and that Man of Sin be revealed; before the other, which is to remove the hindrance to the revelation of the Man of Sin, there is nothing of which the Scriptures anywhere tell us, but everywhere, for every generation, there is the earnest exhortation and urgent command: Be ready; watch; have your loins girded and your lamps burning; *for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.* Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

THE EAGLE IN HEAVEN.

"And I beheld, and heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a great voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the dwellers on the earth, by reason of the remaining voices of the trumpet of the three angels who are yet to sound."—Rev. 8 : 13.

We translate this text direct and literally from the purest critical readings of the original extant. The common English version describes this proclamation as made by an *angel.* This is admitted to be an erroneous reading. It is not sustained by the best and oldest manuscripts. The Codex Sinaiticus, the Codex Alexandrinus, and the Codex Vaticanus, the very highest and most trustworthy authorities on the true reading of the New Testament, have *ἀετος, eagle,* instead of *ἀγγελος, angel.* The Syriac has *eagle.* Griesbach, Scholz, Lachman, Van Ess, Hengstenberg, Stuart, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Wordsworth, Ewald, Alford, and the ablest critics in general, accept *eagle* as the proper and original reading. Bengel, a century and a half ago, wrote, "The Italian version, and other most ancient authorities, widely separated from each other in age and clime, and in very great numbers, clearly vindicate the reading of *ἀετον, eagle,* from all suspicion of gloss." As this agent is in heaven, and speaks intelligent words, it is easily to be seen how interpreters and transcribers, on the ground of congruity, might be tempted to read *angel* instead of *eagle;* but, on the supposition that the original was *angel,* it is impossible to explain how the best, and the vast majority of ancient copies, came to have it *eagle.* We, therefore, take the true reading, and the only one critically defensible, to be *eagle.*

Are there, then, rapacious birds in heaven? No; nothing of the kind. There are other eagles besides birds. The Saviour himself has spoken of them in more than one place. Speaking of the day of His future coming, He said

Digitized by Google

to His disciples: "I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where [*whither*], Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, *thither* will THE EAGLES be gathered together." (Luke 17: 34–37.)

Here, then, those ready and watching saints, who are to be mysteriously conveyed away from the earth upon the first manifestation of the day of the Lord, are called *eagles*. We find them spoken of also in the Saviour's great prophetic discourse in Matt. 24: 26–28, where He admonishes His people not to trouble or disturb themselves to find Him in the day of His coming, and not to heed those who shall say, Behold, He is here, or there; "for," says He, "as the lightning *cometh* out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be; for wheresoever the carcass [slain body]* is, there will THE EAGLES be gathered together." Here, as Hilary observes, "He calls His saints *eagles*, soaring, as it were, to Him, the body, by a spiritual flight."†

There are some who take these eagles to mean the Roman armies, which bore the eagle on their standards; and consider the carcass to be the corrupt Jewish population and state which the Romans destroyed. But the whole force and intent of the passage, and the common voice of antiquity, and of the great reformers, unite in referring the description to Christ and His people, at the time of the second Advent. We are naturally repelled from the idea that Christ should be represented as a dead body, or that His meek followers should be likened to birds of prey. But when more carefully considered, there appears eminent propriety in the figure.

Jesus is the Saviour, most of all *by His death*. It is by His fall that we rise, and by His death that we live. "He that was dead" is one of His particular titles, though He is alive forevermore. He gave His flesh for the life of the world. His own word is: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day: for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." (John 6: 53–55.)

He has also instituted a holy sacrament, concerning which He says: "Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you. Drink; this is my blood which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins." He is the Lamb "slain from the foundation of the world." He is, therefore, the true *slain body* on which all saints feed, to whom they are gathered in spirit, faith, and loving sympathy now, and to whom they shall be gathered in person hereafter, to see Him as He is, and to be with Him forever. And as saints have their life from the slain Christ, they are rightfully likened to the eagles which live on fallen bodies. They are eagles of faith. They feed on the body and blood of their Saviour, broken and shed for them.*

* Some of the critical editions of the Greek Testament have σωμα here the same as in Luke 17: 37, instead of πτωμα as in the *textus receptus*.

† Some one has suggested, that the word in the German is *Adler*, that *Adler* means *buzzard*, and that it is absurd to liken the saints to buzzards. But the German word *Adler* never means *buzzard*, but always *Eagle*. The German word for *nobility* is closely related to it.

* "The congregated *eagles* are the assembly of saints and martyrs."—*Chrysostom*. "Christians are compared to eagles, because they partake in the royalty of Christ."—*Origen*. "Eagles are the saints whose youth is renewed like the eagles (Ps. 103: 5), and who, according to the saying of Isaiah (40: 31), mount up with wings as eagles, that they may ascend to Christ."—*Jerome*. "Christ's body crucified is that of which it is said: 'My flesh is meat indeed.'" (Jno. 6: 55.) "The eagles, which fly on the wings of the Spirit, flock to this body. To this body the eagles are gathered who believe Christ to have come in the flesh." (Jno. 4: 2.) "They fly to Him as to a dead body, because He *died* for us, so as all the saints fly to Christ wherever He is, and hereafter, as eagles, will be caught up to Him in the clouds."—*Augustine*. "As the

Digitized by Google

But not all Christians are to the same extent, and so pre-eminently, *the eagles*. The eagle is a royal bird. It stands at the head of the feathered tribes, as the lion among beasts. There are also different orders and classes of saintship, as there are degrees of sanctity and spiritual attainment. When the Saviour first comes, according to His own word, He will take some and leave others—honor some servants, and cut off some other servants. And those who are "taken" while others are "left," are particularly and emphatically "*the eagles*." They are the heirs of royalty and dominion. They are to have crowns. They are to share in the official honors of eternity, as none but themselves ever will. And the qualities of these are eminently the qualities of eagles.

Eagles are great watchers. They have a quick, clear, penetrating, and far-reaching vision. In this respect they excel all birds. It is almost impossible to surprise or deceive them. Audubon once placed himself in ambush to watch an eagle's nest. The parent birds were absent when he took his position. When the female returned, "ere she alighted she glanced her quick and piercing eye around, and instantly perceived her haunt had been discovered, and, dropping her prey, with a loud shriek communicated the alarm to her mate." And the eagle saints are those who are not taken unawares when the day of the Lord comes. That day is to come as a thief, with stealth, unobserved by the common world; but it cannot surprise them. They are on the look-out for it. They have a clear and keen vision for all signs of its nearness, and they exercise that vision. They are ever on the watch, as commanded by the Lord. Whatever the duties in which they are engaged, both in their going out and in their coming in, they are never unmindful of what may at any time occur. They know their danger and they know their safety, and exercise a corresponding circumspection.

Eagles have elevated aspirations and instincts. They prefer the heights, both when they soar and when they rest. They make their homes among the most inaccessible crags, and excel all birds in their sublime ascensions. So eagle saints have their citizenship in heaven. They live in the world, but all their feelings, aims, affections, and desires are above it. Their greatest impulses are upward, ever upward. They love the higher atmosphere and the sublimer sunlight above the clouds and malarious mists and dangers of earthiness. They build their nests in the mountains of God, and prefer and long to be where they are never more annoyed with the vexations and dangers of this sordid world.

Eagles are stronger of wing than other birds. Their swiftness and power are astonishing. So the eagle saints are distinguished by their vigor of faith and hope. They are particularly strong in those truths and promises which lift heavenward, anticipate the dawn of a sublimer economy, and sit "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Isaiah referred, in his day, to saints of these eminent qualities, and likens them to eagles, where he says: "They who wait for Jehovah, gain fresh strength, lift up their wings *as eagles*, run and are not weary, go forward and do not faint." (40:30, 31; *Delitch's Translation*.) And in Deuteronomy (32:11, 12), Jehovah is likened to a parent eagle, and His elect to young eagles, whom He feeds, and upbears, and teaches to fly and rise to himself.*

eagles are gathered where the carcass is, so shall Christ's people be gathered where He is."—*Luther.*

As additional authorities on the same subject, we name Ambrose, Theophylact, Euthemius, Calvin, Brentius, Bullinger, Bucer, Gaulter, Beza, Pellican, Flacius, Musculus, Paræus, Piscater, Cocceius, Jansenius, Quisnel, Du Veil, Calovius, Suicer, Ravanell, Poole, Trapp, Cartwright, Pearce, Leigh, Andrews, Wordsworth, &c.,—names which give respectability and weight to any doctrine or conclusion to which they are attached.

* "This image, used in Exodus (19:4), is fully verified in Him who is called *the Great Eagle* (Rev. 12:14), and who bears His Church on eagle's wings through the wilderness of this world, and who ascended up into heaven with His young ones on His wings, and to whom, as their Parent, and their Life, and their Food, all true eagles of the Gospel, as His children, are gathered now on earth and will be gathered forever hereafter in heaven."—*Wordsworth in loc.*

"The comparison of Himself to *the hen* was

Digitized by Google

We thus identify a class of *eagles*, other than the rapacious birds denoted by this name;—eagles that have voices, intelligence, and place in heaven.

These eagles are also in heaven before the judgments occur to which these trumpets refer. The Saviour himself, in Matt. 24, puts their gathering together where the body is, in advance of the sending forth of His angels with the great trumpet-sounding. When the sun is darkened, and the moon is obscured, and the stars fall, and the powers of the heavens are shaken, and the sign of the Son of man appears, and all the tribes of the earth mourn; these eagles are already where the Lord, on whom they live, is. John saw them there, among other images, under that of "*a flying eagle*," before the Lamb took the book or ever a seal was broken; where also he heard them sing unto the Lamb: "Thou art worthy; for Thou wert slain, and redeemedst us to God by Thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and Thou madest us unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." (Rev. 4:5–10; 5:8–10.) And from among these was He whom John here beheld and heard flying in mid-heaven, saying with a great voice, "Woe, woe, woe, to the dwellers on the earth, by reason of the remaining voices of the trumpet of the three angels who are yet to sound."

The manner in which this eagle is spoken of, implies that there are others of the same class. The seer says: "I beheld and heard *one eagle*" thus flying and saying. This "*one eagle*" presupposes more eagles; as "*one scribe*," in Matt. 8:19, presupposes more scribes; as "*one voice* from the horns of the golden altar" (9:13) presupposes more voices; as "*one mighty angel*" (19:21) presupposes more angels.

The Church of the first born is to have a part in the administrations of the judgment upon the guilty world. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 4:2.) Hence, when the first seals were broken, the voice of power was heard from the living ones. "*Go!*" And so here, "*one eagle*" has a mission which he executes between the sounding of the fourth and fifth trumpets, as the prelude to what the last three trumpets are to produce. Verily, we know not, and cannot half conceive what ministries and agencies of heavenly sublimity await us, if only we are faithful. We shall fly, like eagles, in mid-heaven, and mingle our voices with the trumpets of judgment, and fill offices of honor and celestial dignity among the transactions of archangels, as they are sent forth to close up the history of a rebellious world! "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

adapted to the time of His first advent in humility. This latter reference to *the eagle* has relation to the time of His second advent in glory, when the eagles of the Gospel will be gathered together where the body is."—*Ibid.*, on 2 Thess. 2:1.

VANITY FAIR.

THERE is much beauty in the world, and much pleasure too. "Truly the light is sweet; and it is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun." "God hath made everything beautiful in His time." And there is much in the world that may be turned to good and substantial account. The path to heaven lies through it, and the rewards and glories of eternity may be made to take a higher lustre by means of the conflicts which its sins and follies impose. But, with all, it is essentially what the great genius of John Bunyan described it a "VANITY FAIR." It is a *Fair*; and it is *Vanity*—a fair, as to its chief characteristics, and vanity, as to its issues and results to them that rest in it. What is a fair? A place where all sorts of articles, joined with all possible attractiveness, are offered for sale to visitors and passers-by. It is an invention for the enticement of the multitude, to persuade them with blandishments and smiles to do what they would not otherwise do. And such is the world. It is a scene of merry bartering, where all sorts of attractive merchandise is exposed for inspection and sale,—where something adapted to the almost endless variety of human tastes, inclinations, and passions, is displayed and pressed with every specious and fair-seem-

Digitized by Google

ing argument upon each one's acceptance. For the covetous and ambitious, there are houses and lands, places and honors, titles and preferments, countries and kingdoms. For the lovers of pleasure, there is carnal delight, and that of all sorts, set out and displayed in the most enticing forms. For those careful about many things and the worldly-minded, there are endearing connections, husbands, wives, masters, servants, trade, professions, and a multitude of business. For those inclined to earthly display and grandeur, there is silver and gold, and pearls, and precious stones, and pictures, and statuary, and labored fashion, and pompous show. In short, all sins, all follies, all vanities, all pleasures and pursuits, lawful and unlawful, that can ever entice the heart from God, are set out in all their charms. Here presumptuous sinners may draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-rope. Here the votaries of superstition can play off their wild fancies, however vain or wicked. Here the god of this world receives the reverence of the unsanctified, and throws his witcheries over the hearts of the children of men. And here thousands upon thousands walk in the vanity of their minds, too busy or too thoughtless to attend to the one, and only true object of their existence. Here also, is juggling, gaming, cheating, playing, and a hundred little inventions to waste the time, entrap the hearts and abstract the substance of the attendants. Here also is profanity for them that like it, and thieving, and rioting and murder, and affairs of honor and dishonor to any amount in which people are disposed to deal in them, and innumerable things to allure and seduce the unwary.

But, through the place of this fair every pilgrim to the celestial city must pass. He that would reach heaven by avoiding it, says Bunyan, must needs go out of the world. Even the Prince of princes, in the days of His pilgrimage, had to go through it, and to be tempted with its solicitations. Again and again did the chief lord of it invite and press Him to buy of its vanities, promising to make Him master of the fair, if He would but do him the honor of purchasing of his gilded wares. But He who came forth from heaven, had no mind for such merchandise, and passed it without expending a farthing on it, or casting back one wishful thought after any of the glittering toys. He estimated them all as vanities, as all His faithful followers must.

The true Christian, in proportion as he becomes spiritually minded, and conformable to his Saviour, looks upon the world, with its pomps and show, as a grave and wise man looks on the bustle and the baubles, the noise and dissipation of a country fair. The whole world to Him is a town of vanity. Men walk in a vain show, in a life of the veriest unrealities, and are ever disquieting themselves in vain. They toil and strive, and eat the bread of carefulness, to make accumulations, and then pass away not knowing who shall gather them. They plunge into excesses, seeking for happiness, and presently find that they have been grasping at phantoms, and their wretchedness is but the greater for the few transient pleasures by which they were deluded. All the strivings of ambition, the contentions of avarice, the vices of the wicked, the frivolities of the gay, and the decorations of the vain, eventuate in emptiness. It is vanity of vanities, all vanity. People try with earthly good to fill the aching void of their hearts; but it is in vain. With all they find the bed too short, and the cover too narrow, which earth furnishes for the soul's repose. Nor sin, nor pleasure, nor business, nor riches, nor honors, nor all the delights of mere sense, can impart solid satisfaction. The soul needs spiritual and substantial food; what earth affords is mere husks and shadows. The wants of the soul are eternal wants; but everything on earth is perishing and transient.

"Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity."

And having seen what the world is to man, let us note also what a true Christian is to the world. If the world is a Vanity Fair to him, what is he to Vanity Fair? The picture is well given in that wonderful dream of the tinker, to which we have already referred. Christian and Faithful had to go through this fair; and, as soon as they entered it, the people were moved, and the town was thrown into a hubbub

Digitized by Google

about them. Three things especially contributed to produce commotion; their *dress*, their *speech*, and their *contempt* for the merchandise of the fair. They wore raiment different from any worn in that place. This caused them to be the subject of remark, and set everybody gazing at them. Some said they were fools, and outlandish in general. But their language excited as much comment as their clothes. Many could not at all understand them. They spoke the language of Canaan; but the people of the Fair spoke only the language of the world. All looked upon them as a sort of Barbarians, and despised them. And what still more provoked to the ill estimate in which the people held them, was the indifferent eye with which they viewed all the gay possessions of these traffickers in vanity. Bright as those wares shone, and enticing as they were to the eyes and hearts of the admiring multitude, they had no attractions for Christian and Faithful. They did not even care to look at them; and when they were called on to purchase, they would put their fingers in their ears, and cry, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity;" and then look up as if to signify that the things they dealt in were above. Being asked what they would buy, their constant answer was, *we buy the truth, and sell it not;* on which account they were despised still more, some mocking, some taunting, some speaking reproachfully, and some calling upon others to smite them. They were presently arrested and taken up for examination. They gave a plain and faithful account of themselves, and said that they were pilgrims and strangers in the world, and were on their way to their own country and the celestial city. But, the more they explained, the more their examiners were displeased, who pronounced them bedlamites who came there only to make disturbance and confusion. They also beat them, cast filth on them, and put them into a cage to be shown around as a public spectacle, the object of every one's sport, malice or revenge; the great ones of the fair laughing still at what befell them. But the suffering pilgrims were patient, not rendering railing for railing, but contrariwise, until some of their persecutors began to sympathize with them and to check and blame the baser sort for their continual abuses of such meek and inoffensive persons. Altercations were thus set on foot between the men of the fair; and blows ensued, the blame of which was all laid to the charge of Faithful and Christian, though they had no part in it. They were therefore beaten more severely than ever, and treated with the utmost rigor. But the pilgrims behaved with unwonted patience and discretion, and received the ignominy and shame that were cast upon them with so much meekness and forbearance, that it won to their side a few men of the fair. This still increased the rage of their adversaries, who now determined to do worse than hurt them with lashes, mockery, and irons, even to put them to death. So they were thrust into prison, and their feet made fast in the stocks. Here they recalled what Evangelist had hinted to them, that one of them should suffer death in that place; and each secretly wished that it might be himself, though leaving all to the sovereign disposal of Almighty God.

They were presently brought forth for trial, on the charge of being enemies to and disturbers of the town of Vanity, and of having shown contempt to the laws of its prince. Faithful denied the charge, so far as anything evil was involved; but Envy, Superstition, and Pickthank were swift to testify against them. Lord Hategood sat as judge in the case, and charged the jury, Blindman, Malice, Heady, Enmity, Cruelty, &c., in a style in consonance with all the old edicts and precedents in the matter of non-conformity to the spirit and fashions of the commonwealth of Vanity. The verdict of *guilty* was brought in against Faithful, and he was condemned to cruel death, which was fully executed upon him. Christian was remanded to prison, whence he escaped, and went on his way.

Behold in this, O ye people of business and pleasure, the spirit of that world which ye so much love, and for which you are so given to apologize. Such is its enmity to goodness, truth, and piety. In every age, he that was born after the flesh has been the persecutor of him that was born after the spirit. Nor is it different now. Christian and Faithful are still the subjects of adverse criticism, ridicule, cen-

Digitized by Google

soriousness, blame, and bloody assault. The unconverted heart has always been, is now, and always will be, at enmity with God, and hence at disagreement with God's truth and people. It cannot endure anything which is not conformed to its views and tastes, and is full of malice, resentment, and revenge towards everything which holds to the real requirements of God. It cannot bear the silent reproof which it sees in the daily life and conversation of a true Christian; but is constantly angry with him. "The wicked seeth the righteous, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth." "He that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked." And if the world is at any time at peace and on good terms with the Church, it is because the Church itself has become debauched, and has descended to compromise with the wicked, which makes it one with them. It is vanity of vanities in the Christian's eyes; and he is a fool, a bedlamite, a contemptible disturber, and a hateful deathworthy wretch, in *its* eyes; and there can be no reconciliation between them. Alter the mind of the Church, and you convert it into a Vanity Fair too. Change the spirit and temper of the world, and it is no longer the world, but becomes a new creation, and is translated from its old self to a new birth. The nominal Christian, and the formalist, whose faith is a mere dead letter, escape opposition and hatred from the world. It cannot hate them, for they are of the world, and the world will love its own, and side with those who are of its party. But if any man will be a Christian indeed, and really faithful to Him who has called us to follow Him, the reproaches of them that reproached the Master will also find out the disciple. Let a genuine man of God appear in Vanity Fair, let him be brought in contact with the thoughtless triflers who have no fear of God before their eyes, let him come into close relations with mere men of the world occupied with the things of this life, pursuing honors, riches, amusements, pleasures, to the exclusion of serious and spiritual matters, and if he is true to his principles and profession, he is as sure to be wondered at, reviled and maltreated as ever was any saint of old. If you think the offence of the cross has ceased, you are mistaken. Satan is still the Lord of Vanity Fair, and the god of this world; and his murderous spirit is in all the children of disobedience. His pride, his envy, his hatred is in their hearts, and will show themselves whenever occasion offers. Let worldlings but see and feel that your face is set against their sins, follies, vanities, delusions, and the spirit of their circles, and they will first look, then laugh, then reproach, then abuse, then hate, and then sanction any plot for getting you out of their way, if not out of the world. For the natural mind is enmity against God, a living sink of active hate and spite, which cannot fail to make themselves manifest toward everything godlike and sacred. While people serve the devil, the world will not say a word; but let them become earnest and faithful servants of Christ, and there is no end to its mockery and sneers. Let a young man go to every ball, and opera, and horse race, and worldly party, and neglect his soul as much as he will, no one interferes; not a word of warning or reproach is heard. But let him begin to read his Bible and be diligent in prayer, let him decline worldly amusements and become particular as to how and where he spends his time, let him become interested in the Church, and seek to live like an immortal being, and from all quarters he is met with the nicknames of Puritan, pietist, fanatic, saint; and ridiculed for being righteous overmuch; and warned against going to extremes, if not dealt with in a much severer manner. Oh, the inconsistency of the world, its depravity and its emptiness! A selfish, conceited, persecuting Vanity Fair.

TAKE THE SAFE SIDE.

THERE are certain classes of persons who seem to be unable to satisfy themselves entirely of the truth of the Scriptures and the Christian religion. They respect Christianity, possess a degree of conscious religious sensibility, and are inquiring with some moral earnestness into religious duties and obligations. They cannot be said to be indifferent, but they have their doubts upon the Christian evidences. They cannot feel assured that the whole thing, much as they are persuaded in its favor, may not,

Digitized by Google

after all, turn out to be a delusion. They do not wish to be skeptics, and yet they are not fully satisfied that Christianity is what it professes to be, and what they would fain consider it if they could just be made sure.

Now, we have a word to say to such persons. Our own conviction is clear and positive that Jesus is the eternal Son of God, incarnated for our redemption; that He was a true teacher of eternal truth; that the records we have of Him are thoroughly reliable; and that all He said, commanded, and ordained, is verily Divine and certain. But even upon the supposition that the case is not perfectly made out, and that there really is room for honest doubt, there is still a just reason and prudence in the case sufficient to determine the question in favor of an earnest and faithful obedience.

It certainly is very unwise to risk great interests unnecessarily, particularly if nothing is to be gained by it. It is altogether best to keep on the safest side of a perilous question. And even upon the assumption that the claims of the Gospel are not conclusively established, and that room for honest doubt may exist, we still claim that in fair and correct reason the decision ought to be given in favor of obedience and faith. The justice of this claim is manifest from the following considerations.

First, a man risks nothing by becoming a Christian. Christianity, heartily embraced, does in no way disable or harm him, either for this world or the next. It does not make him a worse citizen, or any less a useful member of society. The best men that have ever lived were Christians. The purest models of morality, orderliness, and correct living, are to be found among the most conscientious believers in the Scriptures and in Christ. Genuine faith in no way subtracts from a man's usefulness and just right to respect. It takes nothing from his happiness. An infidel or despiser of the Gospel has no advantage over him in any of these particulars. The infidel is no better father, husband, brother, friend, or citizen, than a true Christian. He cannot meet the inevitable trials and sorrows of life with any better temper, or to any better advantage, than a believer. He cannot contemplate death with any greater composure, nor resign himself to it with any greater peace or comforting hope, than a Christian. And even upon the supposition that the Christian religion may turn out to be false, the devout adherent of it is not a whit worse off than the skeptic. He loses nothing by his faith. He has made a mistake, and that is all.

Second, the infidel's creed, or non-creed, has no greater guarantee of certainty than our creed. To say the very least, it is quite as liable ultimately to turn out false as our system. It would be nonsense for any one to dispute this. Suppose, then, that it should finally turn out that the Gospel is true, and all skepticism false (which is surely as possible as the reverse), what will be the situation of the unbeliever? Will he lose nothing by his persistent unbelief? Will he not have made shipwreck of his very existence? Will not his mistake have been an awfully fatal one? The Gospel being true, there is no possible hope for him. Its plain word is: "He that believeth not shall be damned." He must, therefore, encounter a destiny than which it would have been better for him had he never been born. Thus, then, he risks everything, with no possible advantage from it; whilst the believer risks nothing, and is yet in a position to be infinitely the gainer, in case Christianity be true.

Admitting, then, that the case is doubtful, wisdom and common prudence ought to restrain an honest man from standing aloof on the strength of that doubt. It is a risking of too much without possibility of any advantage from it. It puts one on the dangerous side of the question, and bootlessly exposes to the most dreadful calamities that can befall a man. No reasonable being ought to place himself in such a position. It is unwise. It is a sin against his own existence. It is an exposure which can be justified on no sound principles. And whether the evidences of Christianity have been made out to demonstration, or not, it is hence the bounden duty of every honest thinker, in such a state of the case, to embrace it with all his heart, as the only way to put himself in a position of safety until the question is conclusively solved.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. IX. AUGUST, 1871. No. 8.

Special Contributions.

DEATH AND TRANSLATION.

"*Albert Barnes is not dead; he is ascended, he is translated.*" Such is the language which has been repeated again and again, since the death of that great, venerable, loved, and universally respected man. I have heard much stronger language used, as though his departure had been perfectly like that of Elijah—language even stronger than Elisha would have used with reference to Elijah. Though Elisha could cry, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof," yet it seems he was not permitted to see the open heavens, as Stephen did at his death, and as we were permitted to see at the translation of Albert Barnes!

From the language which is often used, we would naturally be led to suppose that the first death had ceased to be the penalty of the law—that it was the purchase of Christ's death, rather than the consequence of Adam's sin. It is astonishing how great, learned, and good men can utter so much that is unscriptural. Mr. Barnes is acknowledged to have been one of earth's great and good men. In many respects, he had few, if any, equals. His was a most beautiful, as well as great character. His humility sought not—desired not such encomiums as have been lavished on him. He did not claim perfection while alive, and would have been unwilling to have been the recipient of such laudations.

Great as he was, good as he was, he was far from being equal to the Apostle Paul, of whom he so lately wrote; and who would dare to say that Paul "is not dead, but is ascended—that he was translated." "Abraham is dead, and the prophets are dead;" and Albert Barnes *is dead.* Of all the past generations, we can only say of two individuals, "They are not dead, they are ascended—they are translated." Enoch and Elijah owing to their remarkable holiness, and to the mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, have escaped death, the penalty of sin. I am often astonished at the language of great and good men with reference to death. Scarcely does an eminently good person depart this life but some talk as if they believed the first death was the purchase of Christ's death—as if death was one of the good things which our Father has provided for us—as if they were really Swedenborgians. I do not wish to say aught against that sect, but if a man is a Swedenborgian, let him be one.

We learn from the Bible that death is the consequence of sin—that as far as man is concerned, death entered by sin, "by sin," and not by Christ. I most freely admit that through Jesus all things are turned into blessings to the believer—even the very curses are turned into blessings. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." (Rom. 8 : 28.) Hanging on Christ—trusting in Him, we have nothing to fear from sin, Satan, death, and hell. Christ brings good to us out of everything. Under his sovereign, blessed protection, our worst foes can only push us heavenward. They cannot harm us. Hence,

"We may smile at Satan's rage,
And face a frowning world."

Digitized by Google

But are they all therefore our friends? Shall we call them friends? Call Satan a friend? Cleaving to the Lord with all our hearts, it is our privilege and duty to thank God for everything; but ought we therefore to call everything a friend?

I most fully believe the Christian has cause to thank God that there are tempting devils. We will see the day, but not here, when we will thank God for every temptation by which He has permitted us to be tried; but shall we call devils friends, and thank them for all they have done to us? *No.* They most heartily meant it for evil, but our Father meant it for our good, and turned it into good. To hear many talk and preach, you would suppose that death is one of our very best friends; but the infallible Word calls it an enemy—only an enemy and never a friend. What right have we to alter that Word and call that friend which God has called an enemy? Do we know better than He? What comparison is there between death and a translation—between even a sudden death and the changing our mortal to immortality? By translation, the bodies of Enoch and Elijah were taken to heaven. When not translated, the body at death is left to moulder back to dust. The bodies of the most holy of all past generations have as really returned to dust as those of the most unholy. The holy who will be alive at the coming of Christ will be translated. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," the resurrected dead, and the holy living will be changed, so that their corruption will put on incorruption, and their mortal put on immortality. (1 Cor. 15:51–54; 1 Thess. 4:16–17.) Their terrestrial bodies will become celestial. Is it not strange that our great and good men will so frequently compare the sad consequences of sin to the glorious triumphs of Christ's death—the rewards of sin to the highest rewards that will be given to the redeemed? I would rather compare earth to heaven—the present, sad, sorrowful life to the most glorious one which is to come. When we die, however sudden may be our death, however triumphant may be our faith, however glorious may be our departure, death triumphs over us. Our bodies must lie under the power of death till the resurrection. After death, we may as really say of a bad man, he is alive, as of the best of all the dead. The truth is, the spirit of neither is dead, and the body of neither is alive. There is a sad difference in their lives, but the spirit of neither is dead. It is contrary to Scripture to say of the very worst of the dead that their spirit has ceased to live. I do not believe the first death brings death to the spirit of any one, nor real translation to any one.

Translation will take place at the coming of Christ; not before. Then we shall put on immortality, and shall triumph over death, and not before. Those who are alive at the coming of Christ and are translated will never be subjected to death. Their triumph over death will be as complete and as eternal as that of the resurrected. In the case of any one of us, we will not have triumphed over death until we shall have waked from the tomb, or until we shall have been translated at His coming. A happy death is not triumphing over death, but is our falling under the power of death in hope of a glorious resurrection—in hope of a future, glorious, and eternal triumph over death. Those who die happily, believe their flesh shall only

> "Slumber in the ground,
> Till the last trumpet's joyful sound;
> Then burst the chains, with sweet surprise,
> And in their Saviour's image rise."

Why is Mr. Barnes—why is Paul—why are Abraham and the prophets dead? Certainly not because Jesus died; not because they have believed on Him; not because they have lived holy lives, but merely because Adam sinned. Hence even those who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression—infants—have died. We die the first death because Adam sinned; the second death, because we have sinned, and have rejected Christ by not believing on him.

Our resurrection, and putting on immortality will be in consequence of Christ's death, and of our trusting in Him. If Christ had not died, there would have been no resurrection. If we do not believe in Him, we will have no glorious triumph over death.

Digitized by Google

The holy dead, though not translated, are happy. Though they are absent from the body, and their bodies are as really mouldering back to dust as that of the most wicked, yet they are "present with the Lord." "They rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." "White robes are given to them."

But the state of the "dead in the Lord," glorious as it may be, bears no comparison to what it will be when our bodies shall be raised and changed "into the likeness of the body of His glory." It bears no comparison to what it shall be when our bodies shall "come again from the land of the enemy," and shall have become celestial bodies.

We use language that is calculated to deceive when we compare death to a translation. Though it may please weeping friends, yet we use comparisons which the Bible does not authorize. Some of those who lauded Mr. Barnes lauded sudden deaths. They called in question the truthfulness and the wisdom of that petition in the Episcopal service which prays for deliverance from sudden death. Perhaps, some of them, had he died by a slow, lingering death, but in all the triumphs of faith, would have lauded that mode of departure. But is sudden death desirable? Our Father knows for whom it is desirable; whether it is best for you and me or not. I believe it is one of the subjects on which the Bible is silent; and, perhaps, it is best I should say but little on the subject. A mode of death which may be best for one, may not be for another. The great mass certainly do not desire sudden death. Even the most holy have thanked God for deliverance from sudden death. Some of them have been in the habit of doing it every morning. To the most of persons, there may be propriety in praying to be delivered from it. Therefore, I would be far from recommending a revision of that petition.

But if any one wants a sudden death, I know not that there is anything wrong in his praying for it, provided it is done in submission. Perhaps that very feeling may have been implanted by Him, who knows it is best for him. However diverse may be our feelings and petitions, every prayer which the Holy Spirit indites is right. There is something very interesting in the feelings of the child who has been long absent from home, and ardently desires to go there. So there is in the feelings of the child of God who has such a desire. Such feelings are incomparably more desirable than to be utterly unwilling to go home—to be satisfied with earth. Yet it seems by far to be the most desirable frame of mind to be able from the heart to say, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt"—not my time, but thine—not my way, but thine. Truly it is most desirable and best for us not to have a wish about such things. I have been very much interested in the language of a lady, who, when questioned if she was happy, said, very far from it; but in answer to other questions, respecting her death, said if it was her Father's will to put her to bed in the dark, she could trust Him. It is good to trust God in the dark. Our Father is infinitely wise, good, kind, and merciful, and if we trust in Him, He will select for us the best time, place, and way. It is most desirable for us to have no will of our own—to lose our will in the will of God. We ought to be willing to live, labor, and suffer for God as long as He wills. Let it be ours not to have a wish of our own. Such a frame of mind is incomparably more desirable than to die in ecstasies. Better to die perfectly resigned to the will of our Father, even if under a cloud, than to die in raptures—longing to be with Jesus. Men apparently on a death-bed, and longing to die, being very happy, have recovered, and returned to the world. Many who have been very happy in church have soon after shown that their joys were not well founded. But in sweet resignation to the will of God there is no deception. It is a more heavenly feeling than rapturous joy—better than to see the opening heavens.

I have been very much interested in the answers of a lady, who, when it was inquired if she was willing to die, informed them she had no will of her own; but when they said, if God should refer it to you, would you wish to die, answered that she should refer it back to Him. I know sight is pleasant. As we are departing, we wish, like Stephen, to see the open

Digitized by Google

heavens; but above all, let us wish and pray for perfect resignation to our Father's will.

The faith that can and does trust God in the dark, honors Him the most. The darker it is, the more it honors Him. It is so through the whole journey of life. It is pleasant to pass life in the sunshine—to have no clouds and darkness; yet it is not always best for us, and does not always honor God. When it is perfectly dark, no light, to trust—to hold on to the promise, honors God, and is most profitable to us. I recently read of a good lady who was enduring a crushing heart trouble and all was perfect darkness, in answer to her daughter's complainings, said, "Hush, shall we not bear our cross when we have His strength to lean upon?"

"His hand the good man fastens on the skies,
And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl."

J. B.

THE REBUKED NATIONS.

ISA. 2; MICH. 3, 4.

As diversity of views seems to exist in the exposition of these texts, I beg leave to present the following as their apparent expository sense:

"The word that Isaiah, the son of Amos saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem." (Isa. 2:1.)

"Therefore shall Zion for your sakes (idolatrous apostasy) be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem become heaps, and the mountain of the house (the Lord's house, Isa. 2:2) as the high places (idol altars) of the forest (or groves)." (Mich. 3:12.) "But in the last days (at the time of the fulness of the Gentiles) it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills (shall be the royal capital of the millennial earth), and all nations shall flow into it." (Mich. 4; Isa. 2:2.)

Correlate texts. "It shall come to pass in that day, the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shenar, and from Hamath, and from the Islands of the Sea (America, &c.). And He shall set up an ensign for the (Gentile) nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (Isa. 11:11.)

"And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair (Jerusalem) and the waste cities, the desolations of many generations." (Isa. 61:4.) "And they shall build houses and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree (1000 years), are the days of my people, &c." (Isa. 65:21.) "At that time they shall call (rebuilt) Jerusalem the throne of the Lord, and all nations shall be gathered (or flow, as in Isa. 2) unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem; neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart." (Jer. 3:17.)

The foregoing quotations, with much besides, is prophetic description of Christ's millennial reign as the King of all the earth, "that shall reign in righteousness with princes ruling in judgment" (Isa. 32:1; Zech. 14:9), which will be confirmed by the following exposition.

The old covenant of Sinai (Ex. 19) was based on mutual stipulations, *i. e.*, Israel's promise of obedience and God's promise of privileges and protection. Israel quickly violated their stipulation. So their promised Canaan—their temporal rest, was held under conditional tenure, which they also violated, and were in consequence ejected from their promised rest.*

* And that was the rule of the Divine administration of the legal dispensation, *i. e.*, its prophecies, promises, and curses had their temporal summary verification—promises were withheld for disobedience, and curses averted by repentance and amendment. But the Gospel dispensation—its administration is the reverse of this, *i. e.*, its promises and curses are dispensationally retributive, to be fulfilled at Christ's coming and the final judgment. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Rom. 11:29), *i. e.*, Christ's sufferings and the Holy Spirit's dispensation were and are not for the merit of Jews, Gentiles, or the Church's

Digitized by Google

But the new covenant (Jer. 31 : 31) recited in Heb. 8, 9 : 15, inaugurated by the blood of Christ, is not based or affirmed of mutual stipulations, *i. e.*, its inception and verification did not and does not depend on man's or the Church's conforming obedience. It is a covenant of grace and not of works as was that of Sinai. The grounds of its dispensationed substituting assertion, was the process of verification of the promise to Abraham, that in his seed, Christ, should the nations of the earth be blessed. Thus Israel and the Gentiles—their church and times are under the new covenant of grace, and its promises, which for their verification, depend not on any requirement of obedience or pre-performance of stipulations.* So all these prophecies and gracious promises as to the latter days, in the texts, are and will be in their fulfilment the process of new covenant verification. The new covenant franchises were affirmed as accruing in their benefits to the houses of Judah and Israel (Jer. 31 : 31), the Gentiles participating during their "times" in all its benefits by God's grace in Christ, by their wild olive ingrafting as in Rom. 11 : 17, 24; Eph. 2. Now, as some (the churches generally, and many adventists) assume, if yet unbelieving Israel, so divinely preserved, are for their unbelief and disobedience, in lapsed relation to the new covenant, latter day promises as to their restoration, &c., then on the same ground we may affirm that the Church is also in lapsed relation to millennial promises on account of its Papal apostasy, and prevailing unbelief as to his personal premillennial advent, coming kingdom, and its glory. Thus not only detracting from the glorious grace motive of the new covenant, but also impugning the Divine veracity, though it may be in the unconsciousness induced by our traditional inheritance of "wrest and misdivision of the word, its prophecies and promises." (2 Tim. 2 : 15.)

obedience, but for God's unmerited grace in Christ, and this is the ground and reason for the fulfilment of new covenant latter day promise as to Israel's restoration, &c., their unbelief, &c., being no more a hindrance thereto, than that Gentile obedience merited their participation in Gospel grace—the "fatness" of the olive stock.

* Yet obedient striving faith in the individual, as by Caleb and Joshua, is indispensable to enjoyment of new covenant franchises as in Heb. 8; but Caleb and Joshua's obedience and faith could not merit Israel's reprieve from the wilderness proscription. Thus dispensational grace to Jews and Gentiles is not for their meriting obedience, but from Divine pity for their foreknown sinful depravity. "Christ died for the ungodly." (Rom. 5 : 6.)

Incidental Expository Suggestions.

1. Man's apparent impossible extremities are God's possible opportunities; and this we may say has been the rule of His dispensational manifestations. Abraham was called out of the thickening darkness. Israel was delivered from the extreme of endurance from under their powerful oppressor. And man never could have conceived the possibility of his redemption through the extreme sufferings and death of Christ. Considering God's almighty power in all diversity of resort, the promised restoration of Israel may be no more impossible or improbable to God, than the American civil war and abolition of slavery were to man, one year before their occurrence. Apparent human impossibilities suggest the time and fitness for God's "overturning" interposition—"in such an hour as ye think not."

2. It must be an expository blunder to make the rebuked warring nations of Isa. 2; Mich. 4, to consist of the resurrected saints, as done by some. The "overcomers," subjects of the first resurrection, perform judicial reigning functions, and are not the subjects of "rebuking" rule. The Christian nations, and the churches even, with their warring, "evil resisting" spirit and education, their superior warring munitions, are as much the subject of rebuke for this cause, as the weaker heathen nations who are thus defiantly outdone by the Christians.

3. If Christ after his resurrection was, as in Acts 1 : 3, "seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God," and if He could thus teach men in flesh and blood, as at Emmaus, what their blindness and ignorance could not other-

Digitized by Google

wise know, and if He did eat before His disciples, as the Lord did in Abraham's tent, and if the resurrected ruling princes, judges are to have bodies like his, where is the expository obliquity of the faith that believes the many prophecies that assert that Christ, as "King of all the earth" (Zech. 14:9), shall restore and convert the Jews, rebuke and subdue the present flesh and blood warring nations, and as the "Prince of peace," with his co-heir ruling princes, in manifestation of "grace abounding" and Satan bound, "reign on the earth" a thousand years, thus summarily accomplishing what human liberty in its diversity of trial, under patriarchal, legal, and Gospel dispensations for six thousand years had failed to do, and thus conclude by the final judgment, (Rev. 20), the hebdomad of earth and man's probation. C. M.

PETALUMA, CAL.

Selections.

THE ANCIENT PROPHETS.

HOW TO STUDY THEM.

IN reading the Hebrew Prophets, it is requisite to have a careful regard to those principles of interpretation which were laid down by our blessed Lord and by the Apostles, and which were applied by ancient Christian Expositors, such as Cyril, of Alexandria, in the Eastern Church, and Jerome and Augustine (especially in his work on the City of God) in the Western.

This has been too often forgotten. The system of Interpretation which is more popular in recent times, is that described by St. Paul when he says, "The letter" (that is, the letter of Scripture taken alone, without the spirit), "killeth; but the spirit giveth life." This kind of exposition has had the effect of separating Hebrew Prophecy from Christianity, and of isolating it, as if it were a thing to be contemplated at a distance, with which we ourselves have little to do.

The Infidelity now prevalent is due in a great measure to the abandonment of the ancient principles of Interpretation, in the exposition of the Old Testament.

In our own times the Old Testament has been regarded for the most part as a subject for critical disquisitions on matters of History, Geography, and Physics—things most useful and absolutely necessary in themselves, but by no means sufficient for the Interpretation of the Old Testament.

The design of the Old Testament is to prepare the way for Christ; and every reverend expositor of it will make it his principal study to enable the readers of it to see Christ in every part of it.

Unless he does this, he is untrue to his mission; and he is leaving open a wide door for the entrance of Unbelief.

How mean and trivial must many of the incidents in the history of the Patriarchs appear, unless, with St. Paul, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Jerome, Chrysostom, and Augustine, and all Christian Antiquity, we read that history by the light of the Gospel, and regard the acts of the Patriarchs as foreshadowings of the history of Christ! As Augustine says in his book against Faustus, the Manichæan, "Not only the words of the Patriarchs were prophetical, but their lives were a prophecy." All the Hebrew Monarchy was like a grand Prophecy of a Mighty One, namely, of Christ. Therefore not only in those things which the Patriarchs said, but also in what they did, and in all things which happened by God's providence to the Hebrew Nation, we ought to search for prophecies concerning Christ and His Church. As the Apostle St. Paul says, "figuræ nostræ fuerunt," they were types of us.

If we dwell on the letter of the Old Testament, and do not endeavor to penetrate beneath the surface into its inner spiritual meaning—if we look at it merely as a book affording scope for critical, geographical, and historical discussions, we may become what the Manichæans of old were—ingenious disputers about the Old

Digitized by Google

Testament; but we shall not be firm believers in it, nor make others to be so; but perhaps cavillers against it.

Again, how cumbrous, slavish, and even repulsive, will many of the ritual requirements prescribed in the Books of Leviticus and Numbers appear, if considered simply in themselves, without continual reference to Christ, and to the Great Sacrifice of Calvary!

How superfluous, unaccountable, and incredible are the miracles recorded in the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt—the three days' darkness, the slaying of the first-born of Egypt, the passage through the Red Sea, the Pillar of the Cloud and Fire; and the Giving of the Law, amid thunders, on Mount Sinai, and the Manna coming down from heaven for forty years, and the smitten Rock gushing with water in the wilderness, and the flowing back of the river Jordan at the presence of the Ark, and the falling down of the walls of Jericho at the sound of the trumpets, and the staying of the sunlight at Bethhoron at the command of Joshua—if these things are regarded merely as incidents in the records of the Hebrew Nation, not exceeding the population of London in numbers, and going to take possession of a petty strip of territory, not much larger than Devonshire and Cornwall! Must not every critical reader, and even a thoughtful child, reject such histories as fabulous, if he is not continually invited by the commentator and preacher on the Old Testament, to read the books of Exodus, Numbers, and Joshua, not merely as historical annals of the Hebrew Nation, but as having a spiritual, prophetical, and typical character, and as recording events which were foreshadowings of the Son of God Himself, and of His Death and Resurrection and Victory over Death and Satan, and of the mysteries of the Gospel, which concern the welfare of all men and all Nations in every age and clime, even to the Day of Doom, and in the countless ages of Eternity?

An Expositor of the Old Testament, who does not continually remind his readers of these truths, is surrendering them into the hands of Skepticism.

There may be, and doubtless have been, many fanciful allegorical speculations of wild enthusiasts in the interpretation of the Old Testament, and these are much to be regretted. But the abuse of what is good does not take away its use; and what is here advocated, is that sound, sober, spiritual interpretation of the Old Testament which is commended to our acceptance and imitation by Christ and His Apostles in the New, and by all primitive Antiquity. The right clue for commenting on the Old Testament was put into the hands of the Church by her Divine Master on the Day of His Resurrection, when He had overcome Sin, Satan, and Death by His Divine Power. In His walk to Emmaus with the two disciples on that day He "began with *Moses and all the Prophets*, and expounded unto them *in all the Scriptures* the things *concerning Himself*." And He said to His assembled Apostles, "'These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me.' Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures."

It is evident from these words of Christ Himself, that the primary duty of the Christian Commentator on the Old Testament is to lead his readers to behold Christ "in all the Scriptures;" and that there cannot be any right understanding of the Scriptures, unless their eyes are opened to see Him there. It is much to be feared, therefore, that with all our boasting of greater advances in Biblical Criticism, we have fallen very low from the standard of Apostolic and primitive times, in many of our expositions of the Old Testament. We are wise in the "letter that killeth," but not "in the spirit that giveth life."

We have a warning against this servile system of exposition in the history of Hebrew Criticism.

Many of the Jewish Rabbis in our Lord's age had an accurate knowledge of the original language of the Old Testament; they held it in their hands, and heard it read in their synagogues. Many of them dwelt in the country where most of the events took place which it records. But they did not understand it. The

Digitized by Google

great "Hebrew of the Hebrews," the holy Apostle St. Paul, expressly affirms that the most learned among the Jews did not *know* (that is, did not comprehend) "the voices of the Prophets" which were read in the synagogues every Sabbath day; and that "they fulfilled those Scriptures by condemning Him" of whom the Prophets wrote. He affirms that "a veil was on their hearts in the reading of the Old Testament," and he does not hesitate to say, that the manner in which the Spirit giveth life to the reader, is by enabling the inner eye to see Christ in the Old Testament: or, in the Apostle's words, "the veil is done away in Christ, in the Old Testament: when the heart turneth to the Lord, then the veil is taken away from it."

Many in the present day study the Old Testament in a spirit not unlike that of the Hebrew Rabbis. They treat it as a common book; and rely on their own philological skill alone for its interpretation. No wonder that a veil is on their hearts in reading and expounding it.

Holy Scripture cannot be otherwise than a sealed book to the most learned and laborious critics, if they do not approach it with meekness and reverence, but handle it with familiarity, and cavil at it in a self-confident, disdainful, and presumptuous temper, as if they themselves were wiser than St Paul and St. Peter, and all the prophets, and even than He who inspired them. That such persons as these should not be permitted to understand Scripture, is no marvel. Rather it would be a marvel if they were permitted to do so. Scripture would not be true, if they could interpret it aright. For Scripture tells us that men cannot understand Scripture except by the help of the Spirit Who wrote it. And the Spirit will not deign to enlighten those who grieve Him by self-confident presumption. God is "the Father of lights." And we cannot see "the wondrous things of His law," unless He vouchsafes to open our eyes and enlighten them. It is only in His light that we can see light. But He will not enlighten the proud. "He resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." "Surely He scorneth the scorners." "Mysteries are revealed unto the meek." "Them that are meek shall He guide in judgment; and such as are gentle, them shall He learn His way." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." "He that keepeth the law getteth the understanding thereof." "If any man willeth to do God's will, he shall know of the doctrine." We must become like little children if we would enter the kingdom of God. He hideth mysteries from the wise and prudent, and "revealeth them unto babes." Balaam's ass saw the angel, and rebuked the disobedient prophet who rode upon her, who did not see the angel. Spiritual pride is punished by spiritual blindness. The will must be rectified, and the heart must be purified, if the mind is to be clarified, and if the spirit is to be glorified. "In the Scriptures," says George Herbert, "heaven lies flat, subject to every mounter's bended knee." Doubtless the reader of Scripture, and much more the preacher of God's Word, and the interpreter of Holy Scripture, must use all helps of sound reason and critical learning, and diligent labor, and careful study, for the understanding of that Word. He must use them with as much industry as if everything depended on his use of them. But he must use them with reverence, humility, and faith, and with constant and fervent prayer for the illumination and guidance of the Holy Spirit. He must use them with continual and loving communion with Christ, Who is ever walking with devout souls to a spiritual Emmaus, and is opening to them the Scriptures, and is making Himself known to them in the "breaking of bread." He must use them with devout attention to every whisper of the Holy Spirit, interpreting one portion of Scripture by another, and to His voice in the Church Universal, especially in her Creeds, which we have received from the unanimous consent of undivided Christendom, and which our Reformers commend to our reverent use in the exposition of Scripture. "Faith," says St. Augustine, "opens the door to the understanding; but Unbelief shuts it." "When I was a young man," says that great expositor, "I approached the study of the Bible with shrewdness of disputation, and not with meekness of inquiry. And thus by my own perverse temper, I closed the door of the Bible against

Digitized by Google

myself, because I sought with pride for what can only be found by humility." The Written Word is like the Incarnate Word, "it is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against." What Christ says of Himself, the Incarnate Word, is true of the Written Word, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, and on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder." It is like Him, "a stumbling-stone and a rock of offence," to some; but to others it is like Him, "Who is the corner-stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth in Him shall not be ashamed."

The holy Apostles teach us that "whatever things were written aforetime" (that is, were written in the Old Testament) "were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Whatever the Hebrew Prophets spoke, was not spoken by any private utterance of their own, but by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, by whose power they were borne along as on a strong stream. The Apostles teach us that "all the Prophets give witness" to Christ, and that the Spirit which was in the Prophets was "the Spirit of Christ." They assure us that the Prophets "inquired and searched diligently concerning the salvation" purchased for us by Christ, and of the grace vouchsafed to us through Him; and that "it was revealed unto them, that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto us, by them that have preached the Gospel unto us, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."

It is this characteristic of Hebrew Prophecy which imparts a special interest to it. The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, who was afterwards sent by Christ to teach the Apostles all things, and to guide them into all truth, speaks to us in the Hebrew Prophets. The Hebrew Prophets were not the original authors of their own prophecies. The Holy Ghost was the Author. He speaks in them, by them, and *through* them. The prophetic writings are *not sources* from which, but they are *channels* through which, the living waters of the Holy Spirit flow.

The truth therefore is, that we, who live under the Gospel, and have the benefit of the exposition which our Blessed Lord and the Apostles and Evangelists have given us, in the New Testament, of the meaning of the prophetic writings, and who stand on the vantage-ground of more than two thousand years after them, and see how they have been fulfilled, have a much clearer view of their scope and purport, than the Prophets themselves had, by whose instrumentality they were written. They "searched and inquired diligently" what that meaning was. We know what it is. The Holy Spirit, which was in the Prophets, has revealed it to us in the Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament. He has taught us there what He Himself meant when He spake by the Prophets in the Old, and what the Prophets by whom He spake earnestly longed to know; and therefore our Lord says, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; for verily I say unto you, that many Prophets have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them."

It would therefore be a low and erroneous notion, to imagine that the Hebrew Prophets have done their work, and that their prophecies belong only to the past. Rather, we may say that they are coextensive with Christianity, and that they possess a living and growing energy, and are ever adapting themselves to events that are arising from time to time in the Christian Church; and that they will continue to possess this vitality, and to exert this elastic and expansive agency, even to the end.

The Son of Sirach, speaking of them, says, "Let the memorial of the Twelve Prophets be blessed; and let their bones flourish again out of their place!" This prayer is verified. By reason of the presence and might of the Holy Spirit moving in them and speaking by them, they have a perpetual freshness, a perennial spring; their prophecies have a luxuriant exuberance, and are ever putting forth new leaves, and buds, and blossoms; and they wait for the full ripeness of their summer season, in the last ages of the Church and the World, when they will bear an abundance of spiritual fruitage to be gathered by the hand of Faith.

Hence we need not scruple to say that among

Digitized by Google

all the writings of the Old Testament, none possess a more practical value for all classes of society in the present age, than those of the Hebrew Prophets.

The most illustrious evidence of the divine truth and inspiration of the Hebrew Prophets is reserved to be displayed in the latter days, in the great conflict, which seems even now to be near at hand, between Truth and Error, between Faith and Unbelief, between the Church and the World, between Christ and Antichrist; and in the final victory, which will crown the patience and courage of the faithful, at the consummation of all things, and at the general Resurrection of the dead, and at the Universal Judgment, when Christ will appear in glory. The prophetical writings may be rightly regarded as a Manual, not only for the Christian Preacher, but also for the Christian Citizen, Patriot, and Statesman, who are called to do battle for the Truth in days of doubt and distress, and who may be perplexed and staggered by the temporary success of evil in Civil Polity, and may even be tempted to despair of the cause of piety and of God in the moral government of the world.

If there is anything which the Hebrew Prophets declare with a more distinct and articulate utterance than another, it is this—that in the latter days of the world, Unbelief and Iniquity will abound, and will triumph for a time; but that eventually all things will be put under the feet of the Divine Governor of the World, the Great Arbiter of the Destinies of Nations; and that all wilful and presumptuous sin will then be punished and crushed; and that Faith, having struggled steadfastly unto the end, will receive a glorious reward.

Thus the Hebrew Prophets supply spiritual comfort to the Christian Confessor in public and private life. They inspire the heart of the soldier of Christ with holy courage, and give him hopes full of immortality.

CHRIST'S AT HIS COMING.

1 Cor. 15 : 23.

What a scene of indescribable glory that will be when the Lord himself shall descend to gather His redeemed to the home He has prepared for them! What a moment of unsullied delight, when at the shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, His sleeping saints, raised, and living saints, changed, "shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord!"

All the hosts of the redeemed shall be marshalled there, in bodies of glory, instinct with Divine life—the saints of old, who on the faith of a promise were worshippers, pilgrims, soldiers—those to whose faith dens and caves bore witness—"of whom the world was not worthy;" the elders and just men who "died in faith, not having received the promise," shall be there; "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;" "Noah, Daniel, and Job;" "Moses and Elias" shall be there; Abel, and the long line of Martyrs; Aaron, and the Lord's priests; Samuel, and the Lord's prophets; David, and the men of faith who sat on his throne; all God's renowned ones, the perfected just, shall stand in that scene for which they in faith waited.

"The Church of the first-born," too, as the bride prepared for her Lord, shall take her place there; all down to the last re-born soul, who shall form the completion of the mystery. She, too, will recount her worthies in that morning; the many who have stood forth in other days, and who stand forth in our own days, as the witnesses of God's truth and the heralds of God's salvation, all shall ascend together and swell the countless multitude of Christ's own—shall take their place too in their respective glories—"every man in his own order"—star differing from star in glory, and each reflecting the image of Jesus.

There will be seats too in the kingdom; thrones for rulership over the tribes of Israel; mansions in the Father's house; thrones around the throne of God; all shall be occupied by the redeemed, each invested with the insignia sovereign love has assigned him. All will "know even as they are known"—each known to each—all known to all. What a season of unutterable joy! of holy intercourse! of uninterrupted communion! But the rapturous thought of each one of this innumerable company will be, they are Christ's—"I am my

Digitized by Google

Beloved's, and His desire is towards me." To be Christ's own will be a source of deep unmixed pleasure, then—(should it not be now?) The absorbing object of their heaven-inspired vision will be Christ—to be forever with Him—to behold Him—to cast their crowns at His feet, paying the heart's deep homage to Him in one united utterance of "Thou art worthy, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood."

The power of Christ's resurrection will be applied to the bodies of His saints; they will be raised, because He has been raised: by virtue of having His life and being indwelt by His Spirit, they will be presented in the perfection of that life in its full triumph over death, and him who had the power of death; they are raised, not for judgment—that to them is passed, Christ bore it for them—but because they are Christ's: Christ's resurrection was the first fruits, and the pledge of that abundant ingathering. He was the first sheaf presented to the Lord, the sample and earnest of the harvest that shall then be gathered into the garner of God; they will be raised up, and presented in the glory with Him. He is the expression of the glory, and they stand in Him. The reunited dust shall be reanimated and vivified with Divine life; the weakness shall be transformed into power, corruption into incorruption, dishonor into glory, the natural body into a spiritual body; it will bear the impress of the heavenly, even as it has borne the image of the earthly. Where is the sting of death? Gone! Where the grave's victory? Gone! Victory, full, complete, eternal, is theirs—Satan bruised under their feet forever.

The saints will stand before the tribunal of Christ to receive the rewards of the kingdom; but they will appear there as glorified saints; no stain of sin shall be there, the last trace of the curse shall have been removed, the reproach of Egypt clean and forever rolled away; the death of the slain Lamb will be learnt in the light of glory, and in the presence of God.

Earth may move on still in its course and projects, as it did when its light was set in the darkness of the cross; its religion may go on too, quite compatible with its godless pursuits, until judgment break the spell of its delusion and dissolve the dream—awaking men to the deadly reality of falling "into the hands of the living God." The light—God's light—shall have been removed to its own proper sphere, there to reflect each its peculiar brightness, "shining as the brightness of the firmament"—"as the sun in the kingdom of their Father"—being with Him who is the sun and centre of that heavenly system, undimmed, unobscured by the clouds of unbelief or doubt. They are with Him as He moves on in the course of the counsels of God, whether relating to the heavens above or the heavens beneath. In the presence of His glory, they shall be presented faultless, "with exceeding joy." Will He "take His great power, and reign," swaying the sceptre of righteous supremacy over a judged and renovated earth? They will be with Him there! After the course of the kingdom shall be complete, and He shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father, will He be tabernacled in the home, the dwelling-place of righteousness, in the new heavens and new earth? They that are His will still be with Him. They are Christ's present and eternal portion, and their place is to be "forever with the Lord." Whether in the kingdom or in the new heavens and new earth, they will enjoy the rest of God in its perfection, and bear witness to His glory in the exalted sphere in which grace has set them, and for which grace has adapted them.

The hope for which we wait is not judgment, not the kingdom set up, not Israel's restoration, or the deliverance of creation from its present bondage (all true in its place)—but God's Son from heaven! He is coming, not to fulfil prophecy, but to fulfil promise: "I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." Judgment waits for this! the restoration of Israel, creation's deliverance—all waits suspended until the rapture of the saints—"they that are Christ's at His coming."

After the Lord Jesus has gathered His own to Himself in the heavens, He will make good the prophetic word in its bearing towards the earth, and deliver creation, bringing it into the liberty of redemption.

Digitized by Google

Well may the affections of the heart be moved at the prospect! Well may the sound of that well-known scripture reverberate in the inner man, "Behold, I come quickly!" Yes, He is coming to appropriate to himself that which He has purchased at His own personal cost; to whom He can say, "I have redeemed thee; thou art mine!" to surround Himself with the trophies of redeeming love. The Father's will will be fully accomplished in the resurrection and glorification of those who were the objects of it: for this they were saved. Our necessities were not the first cause; God is glorified in the redemption He has wrought, and the objects of His love are prepared for the glory that awaits them. They shall stand in the clear unclouded light of divine righteousness, and be at home there. The robe in which they are arrayed is divinely righteous and meet for the occasion.

God, resting in the complacency of omnipotent love, will welcome them Himself; His own immediate presence will be their rest; His unclouded glory the sphere of their worship; God and the Lamb their light and their temple. He will dwell in their midst; they His people—He their God.

What a prospect! Even the anticipation of such a hope lifts our spirits above the clouds and mists of earth; but we need purified hearts to be prepared to allow the rays of that glory to reach within and shed its light abroad there. There should be nothing allowed discordant with that holy scene; it will darken the vision and confuse the affections. The Holy Spirit will be leading us within, to look after the house, and rid it of its corruptions and intruders, instead of opening the windows of the heart to allow the light of a new heaven to fill and irradiate it with its illuminating glory.

Oh that our constant position may be—as those who are "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God"—"to wait for His Son from heaven," with the heart purified and the eye single, with staff and girdle, ready to welcome the shout in the air, whenever it may be uttered; ready! with nothing to leave behind that would retard our upward flight, nothing that may clash with that oft expressed desire—"Amen! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

Editorial.

SOCIETY UNDER THE SIXTH TRUMPET.

"And the rest of the men who were not killed by these plagues, repented not from the works of their hands, that they should not worship the demons, and the idols of gold, and silver, and copper, and stone, and wood, which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk; and they repented not out of their murders, nor out of their sorceries [or *use of drugs*], nor out of their fornication, nor out of their thefts." —Rev. 9:20, 21.—*Revised Text.*

The Apostle Paul assures us, that as time advances toward its conclusion, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13.) We have also repeatedly quoted his startling description of the "perilous times" which will come "in the last days." (2 Tim. 3:1–5.) But Paul was not alone in these gloomy anticipations. Peter and Jude likewise speak of them. Nor were these statements without full warrant in the utterances of the Saviour himself, who particularly and often admonished his disciples, that the gigantic iniquities and sensualities of the days of Noah and of Lot, would repeat themselves as the end approached, and that the judgments of the great day would be pre-eminently deserved by the generation then living. It would, hence, be strange if, in the visions of those terrible adjudications, we were to find no corresponding notices of the bad state of morals then prevailing. And when such notices are found, as in the words before us, it would be contrary to the tenor of the Scriptures on the subject, to take them as mere poetic exaggerations, or as anything other than a literal and true portraiture of the world at that time. Taking the words then, as they have been written for our learning, we here have an account of the moral state of mankind in the period of the sixth trumpet.

Digitized by Google

1. *It is a period of abounding demon-worship.* What demons are, is to some extent an unsettled question. Justin Martyr, and some other Christian fathers, regarded them as the spirits of those giants who were born of the sons of God and the daughters of men in the days preceding the flood. John of Damascus considered them the fallen angels. According to Plutarch, Hesiod, as he himself, held demons to be "the spirits of mortals when separated from their earthly bodies." Zoroaster, Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, and the heathen authors generally, viewed them as spiritual beings, intermediate between supreme Deity and mortals, and mostly the souls of heroes and distinguished persons who had departed this life. Lucian makes his dialogist ask: *What is man?* Answer: *A mortal god. And what is a god?* Answer: *An immortal man.* This gives the common heathen doctrine on the subject. Philo says: "The souls of dead men are called demons." The account which demons themselves mostly give of themselves, according to those who have most to do with them, is the same. Josephus gives it as the orthodox Jewish opinion, that demons are none other than the spirits of the wicked dead. With very few exceptions, the Christian fathers were of like opinion. Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, Augustine, and the vast majority of early Christian writers, regarded demons as the souls or spirits of the unsanctified dead. And the burden of evidence and authority is to the effect, that *demons are the souls of dead men, particularly the spirits of those who bore a bad character in this life.**

It is acknowledged, both in Scripture and in the classics, that the "immortals" whom the heathen adored, were once men; and Paul assures us that the sacrifices of the Gentiles made to these "immortals," were sacrifices to demons, and that their sacred feasts were in honor of demons. (1 Cor. 10 : 20, 21.)† This would seem to give us scriptural authority for believing that demons are what the Jews and early Christians believed them to be. They are, at any rate, invisible spiritual beings, unholy in character, belonging to the kingdom of evil, and having a vicious and pernicious penchant to interfere in the affairs of mankind in the flesh. The Greeks often applied the name of demons to what they considered *good* spirits; but the Scriptures always use the word with reference to unclean and wicked spirits only. There is no such thing known in the Bible as a good demon. The Scriptures everywhere distinguish demons from "the devil" Satan; but our English translators continually call them "*devils*," a name which fitly describes them.

Among the Jews, in the Saviour's time, these wicked spirits incorporated themselves in the bodies of living men, intruding themselves between the soul and the nervous organism, getting possession of men's physical powers, measurably superseding the wills of those affected, so as to speak and act by means of human organs.

Among the Gentiles, many of the persons thus affected were accepted as inspired prophets and prophetesses; and it had become a regular science to know how to induce such connections with demonic powers, and how, at option, to bring their influence to bear, whether for religious or for secular purposes.

There always have been ways of coming into communication with these unclean spirits, of consulting them, and securing their aid. Hence the scriptural allusions to those who have familiar spirits, enchanters, wizards, witches, magicians, soothsayers, diviners, necromancers, and the like. Long before the time of Moses we read of consultations of the spirits of the dead, and the veneration of demons as helpers and guides, to whom it was the custom to resort. Special statutes were given against it in the laws of Moses, as great unfaithfulness and sin against God. The assumption all the way through is, that there was reality in what was pretended in these instances, and a very dangerous iniquity. The lying prophets whom Ahab followed to his ruin were really inspired

* See an argument on this subject elaborated in the *Lectures and Addresses* of Alexander Campbell, pp. 379–402.

† Compare Deuteronomy 18 : 10; 32 : 17; Leviticus 17 : 7, *et seq.*; 2 Chronicles 11 : 15; Psalms 106 : 37.

Digitized by Google

by wicked spirits. Paul encountered a girl at Philippi, whose keepers got great gain from her extraordinary powers, resulting from being possessed of an evil spirit. He cast out the demon, and her peculiar power was gone, and Paul was thrust into prison for interfering with the men's business. This case explains the whole system of heathen oracles and mantology, as the heathen writers themselves explained it.

Modern spiritism, or so-called *spiritualism*, is but a revival of the same thing—a branch of the same iniquity. There doubtless is some reality in it; and it is confessedly a system of intercourse with the dead, whose spirits are invoked in various forms and methods, to teach wisdom; to dictate faith, religion, and life; to comfort and help in trouble and necessity; and to serve as saviours and as gods. It is demon-worship brought to life again. It claims to have vast multitudes of adherents, even among the baptized and nominally Christian. It is influencing whole communities of men and women, who are prepared to commit themselves body and soul, for time and eternity, into the care of these lying demon guides. It has made inroads upon people of all classes, and is received by many as a distinct and the only true religion. Its oracles are loud and hopeful in the prediction that it will soon enlist to itself the governments and reigning classes of the whole world. The Word of God also forewarns that it will be vastly successful. "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils,* speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats." (1 Tim. 4: 1–3.)* Instead of fearing, loving and trusting in God above all things, people will bestow their loving confidence upon unclean spirits, invoking them for guidance, and placing religious dependence in their impious falsities. Having no relish for the saving Gospel of Christ, God will send them strong delusion that they may believe a lie, and be visited with the damnation their perverseness deserves. And at the time this sixth trumpet sounds the prevailing religion of the world will be this self-same worship of demons, and following of demons' doctrines.

2. In connection with this demon-worship, will be *the revival of idolatry*. It is itself idolatry; but with it, idols of gold, and silver, and copper, and stone, and wood, which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk, will again command the genius of men for their construction, and be set up to please their demon-lords, to facilitate spiritual intercourse, and to help out the foul devotions of the infatuated people.

It may appear too disparaging to the understanding of this enlightened age to entertain the possibility of a return to the ancient worship of images. People may feel insulted at the thought. But the way for it is opening, and the process to effect it is already going on. The minds of anti-christian religionists everywhere are fast relapsing into the old heathenish philosophies, and I know not what is to hinder their acceptance of the religions with which those philosophies are conjoined. Modifications of them may be made to conform them somewhat to the requirements of an altered condition of the public mind and taste; but

* Διδασκαλίαι δαιμονίων—*doctrines suggested by demons*; doctrines engendered by the operation of evil spirits. The sense of this passage has been wrongly given by Mede and many others, in understanding the genitive as objective, as if it meant *doctrines concerning demons*. The true and only tenable exegesis is, not that men shall apostatize by accepting doctrines *about* demons, but that they will decline from the true mystery of godliness by taking into their confidence *doctrines which demons teach*.—*See Wordsworth, Alford, Conybeare and Howson, &c.*

* For an exposition of this text in its application to modern "*spiritualism*," see *Prophetic Times*, vol. ii, pp. 158, 174, 185; vol. iii, pp. 14, 30, 46, 62, 75; vol. v, p. 134. On the general subject, see the writer's monograph, entitled "*The Wonderful Confederation.*" Epiphanius, as given and translated by Mede (p. 637), thus paraphrases the passage: "Some shall apostatize from the sound doctrine, giving heed to fables and doctrines of demons; for *they shall be worshippers of dead men, as they were worshipped in Israel.*"

Digitized by Google

idol-worship will again become, as it is even now becoming, the religion of some who claim to be among the most enlightened and the very illuminators of mankind. Socrates had his demon-guide, and Socrates approved idolatry; and if men accept the Socratic philosophy in preference to the religion of the Bible, and submit to be taught by demons as their most trustworthy oracles, what is to prevent them from becoming philosophic idol-worshippers, especially if their spirit-friends should so dictate, and accompany those dictations with the power of working wonders. A little further on in this book we read of a "false prophet" who teaches the dwellers upon earth to make *an image*, to which he gives the power of utterance, so that it both speaks and causes all who refuse to worship it to be put to death. (Rev. 13 : 14–16.)* All this is simply the culmination of the system already in vogue, showing a base, persecuting, and murderous idolatry, also the source and manner of its introduction. The symptoms and tendencies are even now strongly in this very direction. What is *Planchette* but a household god to many who resort to it as a means of spiritual communion, and speak to it, interrogate it, and reverently seek unto it for light, consolation, and guidance? What are the numerous and various inventions constructed and constructing to please the spirits, and meant to serve as material forms and instruments through which the demon-gods are to manifest themselves, and hold communion with their devotees? Is not much of the best science and mechanical skill of spiritualists now employed in answer to spirit-bidding, fashioning implements for closer and easier commerce with these invisible powers? Do not such machines and images of gold, and silver, and copper, and stone, and wood, already exist? And are they not kept in devoted places as holy things, made the centres of circles of people gathered around them for intercourse with devils, as with the world of hope and blessedness, consulted with pious affection, and guarded and revered with all the awe, and sometimes tearful devotion with which the ancient heathen approached the oracles and images of their gods? Only let all this grow and mature in the line in which it has begun and is growing, and bald image-worship will soon live again in what claims to be the enlightened society of modern times, and men and women of boasted intelligence will everywhere be found paying their adorations at the shrines of devils, as to gods. And just this is one of the leading features of the time when the sixth trumpet sounds.

3. And corresponding with the heathen character of the dominant religion, will then be *a heathen state of morals also.*

Murder will be among the commonest of crimes. Sensual and selfish passion will make sad havoc of human life, with no serious thought about it on the part of the leaders of public sentiment. Fœticide, infanticide, homicide, and all forms of sin against human life, will characterize society, and be tolerated and passed as if no great harm were done. And well would it be for us, if such were not largely the state of things even now.

Sorceries, impure practices with evil agencies, and particularly with poisonous drugs, is also given as one of the dominant forms of vice and sin in those days. The word specially includes tampering with one's own or another's health, by means of drugs, potions, intoxications, and often with magical arts and incantations, the invocation of spiritual agencies, the putting under influences promotive of sins of impurity both bodily and spiritual. We have only to think of the use of alcoholic stimulants,*

* In describing these idols, in verse 20, John says that they "can neither *see*, nor *hear*, nor *walk*;" but he specially refrains from saying that they cannot *speak*, or give out oracles; for here he tells us that one at least *does speak*, so as to give intimation of the will of the gods who communicate through it. Grotius relates out of an ecclesiastiastical writer, that there was a statue of the notorious magician, Apollonius, which *spoke, being actuated by some assistant demon.*

* *Matheetes, Apocalypse Expounded*, says: "It is remarkable, that the sin of drunkenness is not among those here enumerated." He is entirely mistaken. The word φαρμακεία—the use of φάρμακα—directly embraces indulgence in intoxicating potions. It is a generic term including drunkenness among its leading species.

Digitized by Google

of opium, of tobacco, of the rage for cosmetics and medicaments to increase love attractions, of resorts to the pharmacopœia in connection with sensuality—of the magical agents and treatments alleged to come from the spirit-world for the benefit of people in this—of the thousand impositions in the way of medicines and remedial agents, encouraging mankind to recklessness in transgression with the hope of easily repairing the damages of nature's penalties—of the growing prevalence of crime induced by these things, setting loose and stimulating to activity the vilest passions, which are eating out the moral sense of society—for the beginnings of that moral degeneracy to which the seer here alludes as characteristic of the period when the sixth trumpet is sounded.

And interlinked with these sorceries, and reacting the one on the other, will also be the general subversion of marriage and its laws, and the deluging of society with the sins of fornication and adultery. The Apostle uses the word "fornication" alone, as embracing all forms of lewdness, but as if to intimate that marriage will then be hardly recognized any more. And already we hear the institution of legal wedlock denounced and condemned as tyrannical, and all rules, but those of affinity and desire, repudiated as unjust. Already, in some circles, we find the doctrines of *free love* put forth and defended in the name of right, a better religion, and a higher law. And it would be strange indeed, if the revival of the old heathen philosophies and religions, which justified, sanctioned, and sanctified promiscuous concubinage, did not also bring with it a revival of all these old heathen abominations. So also has the holy apostle written, that "in the last days . . men shall be . . . *incontinent*." And here the seer enumerates "fornication" as one of the outstanding features in the social character of those times.

And last in the catalogue stands the statement of general and abounding *dishonesty*, the obliteration of moral distinctions, the disregard of other's rights, and the practice of fraud, theft, and deceit wherever it is possible. Pollok makes his ancient bard of earth tell of a time when

—— "Blood trod upon the heels of Blood;
Revenge, in desperate mood, at midnight met
Revenge; War brayed to war, Deceit deceived
Deceit, Lie cheated Lie, and Treachery
Mined under Treachery, and Perjury
Swore back to Perjury, and Blasphemy
Arose with hideous Blasphemy, and Curse
Loud answered Curse; and drunkard, stumbling fell
O'er drunkard fallen; and husband husband met
Returning each from other's bed defiled;
Thief stole from thief, and robber on the way
Knocked robber down; and Lewdness, Violence,
And Hate, met Lewdness, Violence, and Hate.
And Mercy, weary with beseeching, had
Retired behind the sword of Justice, red
With ultimate and unrepenting wrath."

And that time, with just this condition of things, will have come, when this sixth trumpet sounds. We need not wonder, therefore, that it brings a plague of horror and judgment upon mankind, exceeding all that yet have been known.

"This day is worse than the times of the flood. Then the earth was corrupt before God, and filled with violence. Here corruption of every kind, both between man and man, and man and the Most High, prevails; and murders, the highest of the crimes of violence, are numerous. Besides this, there are idolatry and demon-worship, which are not named as existing before the flood.

"Of the men of Sodom, we read that they were 'wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.' Sins of Sodom are here, and others superadded.

"Oppression, rising even to murder, sorcery, and idolatry were found in Egypt. But other sins are found here. No marvel then if plagues like those of Egypt overtake the world then!

"The world has heard the Gospel and refused it. Far greater is its responsibility in that day than in any previous one. Far stouter and more deeply rooted is its attitude of resistance than at any former time.

"Things are advancing with no slack pace towards this dismal consummation."

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. IX. SEPTEMBER, 1871. No. 9.

Special Contributions.

THE PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH.

A NEW AND CRITICAL TRANSLATION.

By Franz Delitzsch, D.D.

First Part—The Book of the Growing Obduracy

Chapter I.

The vision of Isaiah, son of Amoz, which he saw over Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Kings of Judah.

2. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for Jehovah speaketh! I have brought up children, and raised them high, and they have fallen away from me.

3. An ox knoweth its owner, and an ass its master's crib: Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

4. Woe upon the sinful nation, the guilt-laden people, the miscreant race, the children doing corruptly! They have forsaken Jehovah, blasphemed Israel's Holy One, turned away backwards.

5. Why would ye be perpetually smitten, multiplying rebellion? Every head is diseased, and every heart is sick.

6. From the sole of the foot even to the head there is nothing sound in it: cuts, and stripes, and festering wounds; they have not been pressed out, nor bound up, nor has there been any soothing with oil.

7. Your land—a desert; your cities—burned with fire; your field—foreigners consuming it before your eyes, and a desert like overthrowing by strangers.

8. And the daughter of Zion remains like a hut in a vineyard; like a hammock in a cucumber field; as a besieged city.

9. Unless Jehovah of hosts had left us a little of what had escaped, we had become like Sodom, we were like Gomorrah.

10. Hear the word of Jehovah, ye Sodom judges; give ear to the law of our God, O Gomorrah nation!

11. What is the multitude of your slain-offerings to me? saith Jehovah. I am satiated with whole offerings of rams, and the fat of stalled calves; and blood of bullocks, and sheep, and he-goats, I do not delight in.

12. When ye come to appear before my face, who doth require this at your hand, to tread my courts?

13. Continue not to bring lying meat-offering; abomination incense is it to me. New-moon and Sabbath, calling of festal meetings—I cannot bear ungodliness and a festal crowd.

14. Your new-moons and your festive seasons my soul hateth; they have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them.

15. And if ye stretch out your hands, I hide my eyes from you; if ye make ever so much praying, I do not hear: your hands are full of blood.

16. Wash, cleanse yourselves; put away the badness of your doings from the range of my eyes; cease to do evil.

17. Learn to do good, attend to judgment, set the oppressor right, do justice to the orphan, conduct the cause of the widow.

18. O come, and let us reason together, saith

Digitized by Google

Jehovah. If your sins come forth like scarlet cloth, they shall become white as snow; if they are red as crimson, they shall come forth like wool!

19. If ye then shall willingly hear, ye shall eat the good of the land!

20. If ye shall obstinately rebel, ye shall be eaten by the sword: for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.

21. How is she become a harlot, the faithful city! she, full of right, lodged in righteousness, and now—murderers.

22. Thy silver has become dross, thy drink mutilated with water.

23. Thy rulers are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth presents, and hunteth after payment; the orphan they right not, and the cause of the widow hath no access to them.

24. Therefore (the) saying of the Lord, of Jehovah of hosts, of the mighty one of Israel: Ah! I will relieve myself on mine adversaries, and will avenge myself upon mine enemies:

25. And I will bring my hand over thee, and will smelt out thy dross as with alkali, and will clear away all thy lead:

26. And I will bring back thy judges as in the olden time, and thy counsellors as in the beginning: afterwards thou wilt be called City of Righteousness, Faithful City.

27. Sion will be redeemed through judgment, and her returning one through righteousness.

28. And (the) breaking up of the rebellious and sinners together; and those who forsake Jehovah will perish.

29. For they become ashamed of the terebinths, in which ye had your delight; and ye must blush for the gardens, in which ye took pleasure:

30. For ye shall become like a terebinth with withered leaves, and like a garden that hath no water.

31. And the rich man becomes tow, and his work the spark; and they will both burn together, and no one extinguisheth them.

Chapter II.

The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw over Judah and Jerusalem.

2. And it cometh to pass at the end of the days, the mountain of the house of Jehovah will be set at the top of the mountains, and exalted over hills; and all nations shall pour unto it.

3. And peoples in multitude go and say, come, let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; let Him instruct us out of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for instruction will go out from Zion, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.

4. And He will judge between the nations, and deliver justice to many peoples; and they forge their swords into coulters, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation lifts not up the sword against nation, neither do they exercise themselves in war any more.

5. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of Jehovah.

6. For thou hast rejected thy people, the house of Jacob; for they are filled with things from the east, and are conjurors like the Philistines; and with the children of foreigners they go hand in hand.

7. And their land is filled with silver and gold, and there is no end of their treasures; and their land is filled with horses, and there is no end of their chariots;

8. And their land is filled with—idols; the work of their own hands they worship, that which their own fingers have made.

9. Thus then, men are bowed down, and lords are brought low; and forgive them—no, that Thou wilt not.

10. Creep into the rock, and bury thyself in the dust, before the terrible look of Jehovah, and before the glory of His majesty.

11. The people's eyes of haughtiness are humbled, and the pride of their lords is bowed down; and Jehovah, He only, stands exalted in that day.

12. For Jehovah of hosts hath a day over everything towering and lofty, and over everything exalted; and it becometh low.

13. As upon the cedars of Lebanon, the lofty and exalted, so upon all the oaks of Bashan.

14. As upon all mountains, the lofty ones, so upon all hills, the exalted ones.

Digitized by Google

15. As upon every high tower, so upon every fortified wall.

16. As upon all ships of Tarshish, so upon everything beautiful to look at.

17. And the haughtiness of the people is bowed down, and the pride of the lords brought low; and Jehovah, He alone, stands exalted in that day.

18. And the idols utterly pass away.

19. And they will creep into caves in the rocks, and cellars in the earth, before the terrible look of Jehovah, and before the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to put the earth in terror.

20. In that day will a man cast away his idols of gold and his idols of silver, which they made for him to worship, to the moles and to the bats;

21. To creep into the cavities of the huge stones, and into the clefts of the rocks, before the terrible look of Jehovah, and before the glory of His majesty, when He arises to put the earth in terror.

22. Oh, then, let man go, in whose nose is a breath; for what is he estimated at.

Chapter III.

For, behold, the Lord Jehovah of hosts takes away from Jerusalem and from Judah supporter and means of support, every support of bread and every support of water;

2. Hero and man of war, judge and prophet, and soothsayer and elder;

3. Captains of fifty, and the highly distinguished, and counsellors, and masters in art, and those skilled in magical words.

4. And I give them boys for princes, and caprices shall rule over them.

5. And the people oppress one another, one this, and another that; the boy breaks out violently upon the old man, and the despised upon the honored.

6. When a man shall take hold of his brother in his father's house (saying), Thou hast a coat, thou shalt be our ruler, and take this ruin under thy hand;

7. He will cry out in that day, I do not want to be a healer; there is neither bread nor coat in my house: ye cannot make me the ruler of the people.

8. For Jerusalem is ruined and Judah fallen; because their tongue and their doings (are) against Jehovah, to defy the eyes of His glory.

9. The look of their faces testifies against them, and their sin they make known like Sodom, without concealing it: woe to their soul! for they do harm themselves.

10. Say of the righteous, that it is well with him; for they will enjoy the fruit of their doings.

11. Woe to the wicked! it is ill (with him); for what his hands have wrought will be done to him.

12. My people, its oppressors are boys, and women rule over it; my people, thy leaders are misleaders, who swallow up the way of thy paths.

13. Jehovah hath appeared, to plead, and standeth up to judge the nations.

14. Jehovah will proceed to judgment with the elders of His people, and its princes. And ye, ye have eaten up the vineyard; spoil of the suffering is in your house.

15. What mean ye that ye crush my people, and grind the face of the suffering? Thus saith the Lord Jehovah of hosts.

16. Jehovah hath spoken: Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk about with extended throat, and blinking with the eyes, walk about with tripping gait, and tinkle with their foot-ornaments;

17. The Lord of all makes the crown of the daughters of Zion scabbed, and Jehovah will uncover their shame.

18. On that day the Lord will put away the show of the ankle-clasps, and of the head-bands, and of the crescents;

19. The ear-rings, and the arm-chains, and the light veils;

20. The diadems, and the stepping-chains, and the girdles, and the smelling-bottles, and the amulets;

21. The finger-rings, and the nose-rings;

22. The gala-dresses, and the sleeve-frocks, and the wrappers, and the pockets;

23. The hand-mirrors, and the sindu-cloths, and the turbans, and the gauze mantles.

24. And instead of balmy scent there will be

Digitized by Google

mouldiness; and instead of the sash, a rope; and instead of artistic ringlets, a baldness; and instead of the dress-cloak, a frock of sackcloth, branding instead of beauty.

25. Thy men will fall by the sword, and thy mighty in war.

26. Then will her gates lament and mourn, and desolate is she, sitting down upon the ground.

Chapter IV.

And seven women lay hold of one man in that day, saying, we will eat our own bread, and wear our own clothes; only let thy name be named upon us, take away our reproach.

2. In that day will the sprout of Jehovah become an ornament and glory, and the fruit of the land pride and splendor for the redeemed of Israel.

3. And it will come to pass, whoever is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem, holy will he be called, all who are written down for life in Jerusalem.

4. When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged away the blood-guiltiness of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of sifting.

5. And Jehovah creates over every spot of Mount Zion, and over its festal assemblies, a cloud by day, and smoke, and the shining of flaming fire by night: for over all the glory comes a canopy.

6. And it will be a booth for shade by day from the heat of the sun, and for a refuge and covert from storm and from rain.

Chapter V.

Arise, I will sing of my beloved, a song of my dearest touching his vineyard. My beloved had a vineyard on a fatly nourished mountain-horn.

2. And dug it up and cleared it of stones, and planted it with noble vines, and built a tower in it, and also hewed out a winepress therein; and hoped that it would bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

3. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, between me and my vineyard!

4. What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore did I hope that it would bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes?

5. Now then, I will tell you what I will do at once to my vineyard: take away its hedge, and it shall be for grazing; pull down its wall, and it shall be for treading down.

6. And I will put an end to it: it shall not be pruned nor digged, and it shall break out in thorns and thistles; and I will command the clouds to rain no rain upon it.

7. For the vineyard of Jehovah of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are the plantation of His delight: He waited for justice, and behold grasping; for righteousness, and behold a shriek.

8. Woe unto them that join house to house, who lay field to field, till there is no more room, and ye alone are dwelling in the midst of the land.

9. Into mine ears Jehovah of hosts: of a truth many houses shall become a wilderness, great and beautiful ones deserted.

10. For ten yokes of vineyard will yield one pailful, and a quarter of seed-corn will produce a bushel.

11. Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning to run after strong drink; who continue till late at night with wine inflaming them!

12. And guitar and harp, kettle-drum and flute, and wine, is their feast; but they regard not the work of Jehovah, and see not the purpose of His hands.

13. Therefore my people go into banishment without knowing; and their glory will become starving men, and their tumult men dried up with thirst.

14. Therefore the under-world opens its jaws wide, and stretches open its mouth unmeasurably wide; and the glory of Jerusalem descends, and its tumult, and noise, and those who rejoice within it.

15. Then are mean men bowed down, and lords abased, and the eyes of lofty men are humbled.

16. And Jehovah of hosts shows himself ex-

Digitized by Google

alted in judgment, and God the Holy One sanctifies himself in righteousness.

17. And lambs feed as upon their pasture, and nomad shepherds eat the waste places of the fat ones.

18. Woe unto them that draw crime with cords of lying, and sin as with the rope of a wagon;

19. Who say, Let Him hasten, accelerate His work, that we may see; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come, that we may experience it.

20. Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who give out darkness for light, and light for darkness; who give out bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.

21. Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight.

22. Woe unto those who are heroes to drink wine, and brave men to mix strong drink.

23. Who acquit criminals for a bribe, and take away from every one the righteousness of the righteous.

24. Therefore, as the tongue of fire devoureth stubble, and hay sinketh together in the flame, their root will become like mould, and their blossom fly up like dust; for they have despised the law of Jehovah of hosts, and scornfully rejected the proclamation of the Holy One of Israel.

25. Therefore is the wrath of Jehovah kindled against His people, and He stretches His hand over them, and smites them; then the hills tremble, and their carcasses become like sweepings in the midst of the streets. For all this His anger is not appeased, and His hand is stretched out still.

26. And lifts up a banner to the distant nations, and hisses to it from the end of the earth; and, behold, it comes with haste swiftly.

27. There is none exhausted, and none stumbling among them: it gives itself no slumber, and no sleep; and to none is the girdle of his hips loosed; and to none is the lace of his shoes broken.

28. He whose arrows are sharpened, and all his bows strung; the hoofs of his horses are counted like flint, and his wheels like the whirlwind.

29. Roaring issues from it as from the lioness: it roars like lions, and utters a low murmur; seizes the prey, carries it off, and no one rescues.

30. And it utters a deep roar over it in that day like the roaring of the sea: and it looks to the earth, and behold darkness, tribulation, and light (an occasional brightening of the gloom which does not result in day); it becomes night over it in the clouds of heaven.

GRIEVOUS WOLVES.

"I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock."—Acts 20: 29.

How beautiful a description of the parting between a loving, faithful teacher and his attached converts is that of the affecting scene on the sea-shore of Miletus as given by St. Luke. The Spirit had testified to St. Paul that in every city bonds and afflictions abided him; and so well was he acquainted with the fury and fanaticism of his countrymen, that he could have no other human prospect, if he should fall into their hands, than that of dying at Jerusalem for the Lord Jesus. He was ready not only to suffer bonds, but to relinquish life itself, as a manifestation of his fervent love, if it was so determined in God's providential economy, as he testified on another occasion. The same premonitions of evil saddened the hearts of his devoted disciples, for persecution raged relentlessly against them both from Jew and Gentile; and so prominent an apostate from Judaism, and so zealous a propagator of the new faith, and so stern a denunciator of idolatry among the Gentiles, was, of course, the object of intense hatred to both, and a certain mark for their vengeance. Deeply painful as was the prospect of separation under these appalling circumstances, with the anticipation that was almost certainty of never meeting in this life again, yet *none of these things moved him;* that is, from his steadfast purpose of enduring all things for Christ; for it is evident that his *feelings* were deeply moved, as his language at Cæsarea also evinces: "What mean ye to weep and to break my heart?" Such ardent affection as his must have been deeply moved and tried, as they fell

Digitized by Google

upon his neck and clung to him in their great grief, "sorrowing most of all for the words that he spake, that they should see his face no more."

Far more deeply were his feelings moved and his fears excited, as his prophetic eye beheld the spoliation of his little flock by rapacious wolves; and, more terrible still, that the whole Christian fold would be invaded, torn, and seriously injured by these monsters. Even *his* brave heart quailed at such a vision, and his sympathetic tears flowed freely at such an overwhelming prospect. Oh, how those grievous wolves would wound those for whom Christ died! The mystery of iniquity was already at work, and the climax was inevitable.

It is needless to dwell upon the heresies that these early wolves disseminated, and the numberless sects that arose in consequence, producing divisions and bringing disrepute upon Christianity. Were the task attempted, to use inspired language, the world could scarcely contain the books. But a very brief glance at some of the mischief accomplished by the larger and more rapacious wolves may not be unprofitable. Arianism was a most destructive wolf to the flock of Christ, and to this day it has not recovered from the injuries inflicted. Within His fold Socinianism, Unitarianism, and other forms of infidelity, still deny the Lord that bought them, having the form of godliness, and, with loud, swelling words, making pompous profession of their Christianity. Arius, of Alexandria, about the year 315, promulgated the fearful and obnoxious heresy that was destined to make such havoc among Christ's sheep. Denying His Deity, the rejection of the atonement was an unavoidable sequence; and so successful was he, that the poison circulated with such fearful rapidity through the Church—the beautiful, prosperous, loudly-professing Church—that in a short time two-thirds of its members accepted and believed the fatal heresy. Although rejected by the Council of Nice in 325, the next Council that met decided in its favor by a majority of its members. This wolf's power was indeed irresistible, when the flock itself drew it so caressingly to its bosom. Then it was that Athanasius stood forth so dauntlessly, weak, yet strong in the strength of Christ, against the world; and was driven from his Church for maintaining the truth. Oh, how the wolves had already demoralized the flock! This particular one's devastations penetrated far and wide; in the fifth century into Africa, also into Asia; and the baleful influences permeated Italy, Spain, France, until, in the commencement of the sixth century, it was triumphant in many places. After a while it declined and lost power for a time, then reviving, was again triumphant, but seemed to be finally subdued about the end of the eighth century. But it had a tremendous vitality; and being aroused from its dormant state by the adversary of the flock, who had created and bestowed his own power upon it, it yet dwells within the fold and seeks whom it may devour.

But a wolf still more sanguinary, and of yet larger dimensions, was to make a terrible invasion and to subjugate and to destroy almost the entire flock. It was beginning to exert an influence even while Paul yet lived; and as it acquired more and more power, it became still more formidable and bloodthirsty. This wolf we designate Romanism, or Popery, although it arrogantly styles itself the Holy Catholic Church. Assuming to possess the keys of heaven and hell, she professes to extricate from that direful region, if munificently remunerated, and to waft the departed soul upon invisible angelic wings to repose in peace upon the bosom of Abraham in Paradise. Then, as she finds Christ's atoning work and infinite satisfaction insufficient, she has supplemented them by penance; and if only our inward contrition is accompanied by proportionate external satisfaction, our sins shall be forgiven and their inevitable temporal punishment remitted—yea, even punishment in the world to come may be mitigated, although some of her theologians deny this to be the case; but as the infallible Leo X approved and sanctioned all of Fetzel's teachings and proceedings in the sixteenth century, it must be correct. What is infallibly true in one era cannot be infallibly false in another. Although God the Father so

Digitized by Google

loved this guilty world as to give his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life, yet he must needs be propitiated by the saints and the Blessed Virgin; and He who laid down His life in sacrifice, to save us from condemnation, does not truly understand the necessities of human nature, nor have the tender pity for its frailties, that is characteristic of her. Christ *may* feel thus; but this is doubtful, and the Church will "make assurance doubly sure." And that there may not be the shadow of a doubt, as His sacrifice may have been imperfect, she offers Him in perpetual immolation upon her altars. He said it was to be *once for all*, in the end of time, to take away sin, and by *one offering* perfect forever those who shall be sanctified; but she says it is most improbable that so stupendous a work should have been accomplished by one offering. And lest her children should be perverted, or *converted*, she exerts her maternal authority, and prohibits so dangerous and injurious a book as the Bible.

And so sanguinary is this wolf that she is literally drunken with the blood of the saints. Could such continuous and intemperate draughts fail to produce intoxication? She says that to her was given the right to extirpate heresy and to exterminate heretics at any cost, in order that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. All kinds of persecution are justifiable; sinners must be *compelled* to come in; and of what consequence is temporal suffering if it insures salvation? If they are incorrigible, they must be exterminated—the safety of the faithful demands it.

True to her wolfish instincts, as well as principles, she has slaughtered saints by wholesale far and wide. The Waldenses were the special subjects of her fury, and thousands were relentlessly and cruelly slain; and on one occasion, when they fled to dens and caves for refuge, wood and straw were heaped against their place of shelter and fire applied. On examination afterwards four hundred dead babes were found within their martyred mothers' arms. The wolf indeed did raven on the blood of the innocent. Need we refer to St. Bartholomew's day? We will merely glance at its atrocities, to show that there has been no misrepresentation of the ferocity of this wolf. It is far from agreeable to dwell upon these details, and to recall these revolting scenes, but it is well sometimes to consider what others have had to bear for their religion's sake, and that we may not be seduced from the simplicity of Gospel faith by a false and dangerous charity that could lead us to extenuate such atrocities, and admire the beautiful system whose gorgeous ritualistic observances, with its charming adjuncts of music, painting, architecture, &c., are so well calculated to please æsthetical and poetical tastes within us; and whose most zealous and fanatical devotees can assume the most soft and insinuating address. Although we should not sinfully and foolishly yield to mere blind prejudice, it is better for us to know things as they are sometimes, even at the risk of having our sensibilities shocked.

"All through that fearful Sabbath-day, the feast of St. Bartholemew, and for two succeeding days, the murders went on; the whole city was in arms; every hat or cap was marked with a white cross, and every Catholic was converted into an assassin. Charles, a raging lunatic, rode through the streets laughing and jesting over the fallen; the streets were filled with corpses; the Seine was turned to blood; many Catholics grew rich by the plunder of the Huguenots." "Charles IX shot at the flying Huguenots from his bed-room window. The rage of the murderers was chiefly turned against women and infants. One man threw two little children into the Seine from a basket; another infant was dragged through the streets by a cord tied around its neck by a throng of Catholic children; a babe smiled in the face of the man who had seized it, and played with his beard, but the monster stabbed the child, and with an oath threw it into the Seine."

"For three days the massacre continued with excessive atrocities; a month later Huguenots were still being murdered in Paris. It is computed that several thousand persons perished in that city alone. In every part of the kingdom, by order of the king, an effort was

Digitized by Google

made to exterminate the Huguenots; and Lyons, Orleans, Bordeaux, and all the provincial towns, ran with blood. Four thousand reformers are said to have been killed in Lyons. At Bordeaux, Auger, the most eloquent of the Jesuit preachers, employed all his powers in urging on the work of slaughter. 'Who,' he cried, 'executed the divine judgments at Paris! The angel of the Lord. And who will execute them in Bordeaux? The angel of the Lord, however man may try to resist him!' The number of the slain throughout France has been variously estimated at from ten to one hundred thousand. History has no parallel to offer to this religious massacre, even in its most barbarous periods."

And the evidence that the secular powers were only instigated and controlled by superior wolfish authority is too strong to be denied, or even to attempt prevarication. The pope, Gregory XIII, received the intelligence with a joy that he did not conceal, and exclaimed, ecstatically: "Good news! good news! all the Lutherans are massacred except the Vendomets, whom the king has pardoned for his sister's sake." His transport was so great that he presented a large sum of money to the gentleman who gave him the intelligence. He ordered a grand jubilee and public procession, which he attended in person, with all the nobility of Rome. Medals were struck in approbation; and a picture, still in existence, was painted upon the walls of the Vatican, in commemoration of this glorious and righteous event. So the wolf is undoubtedly responsible for these barbarities.

We will gladly turn from these sickening horrors, for this wolf is now greatly shorn of its power to injure, though not of its desire. An infallible church cannot make a mistake; and the extirpation of heretics in the nineteenth century would be just as praiseworthy and acceptable to God as in earlier ages. We might imagine that the education and civilization of the present age would not tolerate such fiendish barbarity and persecution; but the tools of an infallible power must necessarily be pliant, and from an inspired prediction we have reason to expect another persecution that will throw all previous ones into the shade by its greater ferocity, malignity, and extent.

Another grievous wolf of more modern origin, is the spirit of infidelity and rationalism that is prevalent even in the professing Church. The awful religious opinions, together with the radical ideas of liberty and equality disseminated in France, and thence penetrating into other parts of Europe and America, have borne their noxious and deadly fruit. Freedom has become license—license in all things—even to interpret God's Word according to individual opinions, feelings, and desires. Ignore all human authority, and the divine will be speedily repudiated. It is glorious for the mind to be emancipated; to feel that it need not accept the decisions of Pope and Councils, when these conflict with Scriptural truth, and yet have no fear of being burned at the stake, but a slavery to self may be quite as injurious and dangerous. Reason cannot possibly understand how the literal signification can be the correct one as applied to doctrinal difficulties and prophetical problems, and so there must be a latent spiritual meaning which God has buried deeply, to tax our industry in searching for it, and our powers of ingenuity in discovering it. Our tastes and our inclinations come in conflict with precepts and practical inculcations: to comply with them literally would be impracticable in this matter-of-fact world, where we must meet things as they are, and persons as they are constituted; they are exquisite in theory, but who, save a fanatic, would think of a literal observance of such commands? What *do* they mean? One divine says this, and another says that, and may not my hypothesis be as correct as either of them? If the plain and unadorned language used in conveying doctrinal truth and in uttering predictions must be transposed and figures put there, how can preceptive language have any other than a spiritual signification? And is not this looseness—this license—really responsible for a literal disregard of, and practical contempt for, some of the most sacred obligations? Alas, for man's liberty, on which he so boasts and prides himself! This hideous wolf is indeed making sad havoc among the flock.

Digitized by Google

Mormonism is a wolf of too disgusting a nature to dwell upon, but it has done, and is still doing a vast amount of mischief. They esteem themselves a part of the flock, although the wolf has quite lured them from the fold.

And Spiritualism, which has been thoroughly described and exposed in this Serial, we will merely allude to as occupying a conspicuous place among the wolves. It is sufficiently formidable to have slain its tens of thousands, probably more, and its victims do not seem to be diminishing.

And terrible as has been the destruction within the fold of Christ by all these grievous wolves, and many, many others to which we cannot even allude, we yet have cause to apprehend the advent of one still more ferocious. It is written: "All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life."

"He doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

"And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."—Rev. 13: 8, 13–15.

Is that not a wolf to be feared? There seems to be no reason for any other than a literal interpretion of such language, except what appears to human incredulity its horrible improbability; but whatever be the real meaning of those ominous words, they can only refer to something of the most desolating and overwhelming nature. All forms of infidelity and spurious religion will doubtless coalesce and delegate their minor power to the irresistible wolf, in order that the hated flock may be utterly annihilated. Antichrist and his confederates—how terrible the thought of their ravages!

But he shall meet his merited doom, and all other grievous wolves shall perish with him, and nevermore shall they attack the flock that Christ has purchased with His own blood. We cannot avert these horrors; they are fixed in God's immutable decrees; we can warn and exhort with much long-suffering and doctrine; we can bewail and deplore, for we are only human; but we also can look to the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and wait in hope and patience for the "inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

M. E. S.

Selections.

THE MAN OF SIN.

WHO, THEN, WILL THIS BE? The answer lies at hand in the Apostolic prophecy. When the Apostle says, it is the "*man* of sin and *son* of perdition," he tells us that sin, or literally, *lawlessness*—consequently, rebellion against God, willing and doing in opposition to God's known and recognized will—will form the principal feature and main characteristic of the person of the man of sin. The Apostle in effect says, A man will arise who will not, like other men, be held captive and impelled forward in sin, as a wretched slave subdued and led away by it; nor will he merely break forth from time to time out of this more passive state into open rebellion and enmity against God; but he will be one in whom sin has attained such a degree of development and power, that it forms, properly speaking, the stamp and especial mould of his spiritual character. Is that possible? asks the human heart with dread. Is it possible that a man who lives in the time of grace upon earth, in the midst of the saving influences of Divine compassion, can attain to this extreme of wickedness?

Alas! my dear hearers, if we are acquainted

Digitized by Google

with the depths of evil in our own heart, and know that what is yet good in us, or what is not yet entirely enlisted in the service of sin and Satan, has been preserved neither through our natural goodness nor through our zealous working, our carefulness, and efforts, but that all this is the free, delivering, and compassionating grace of God in our life, such a one may at least think, How would it be with me, if God should withdraw from me this preserving grace; if, after long unworthiness, and manifold and ever-renewed rejection of His gracious drawing, and His loving preservation or warning, He should finally give me up to Satan and the powers of darkness, to exert their influence upon me? *Then* there arises within one the terrible thought, I might myself, even, become a man of sin!

And now consider, further, that man cannot reach the extreme of wickedness so long as he knows only by hearsay the whole fulness of God's grace and compassion. As Judas the betrayer was among the number of the chosen disciples of the Lord—as his sin assumed so fearful a character on the very account that he had lived constantly in the companionship of the All-gracious One, the Saviour of Sinners—so must we also expect it to be with the man of sin. We cannot think of him as a man who, merely in following his natural inclinations and desires, passes quietly from bad to worse, and eventually reaches the extreme of wickedness. This extreme can be reached only after a severe conflict with the powers of grace. A man of sin can be only one who has with the eye of the spirit clearly seen the Lord in his life's path, not once, but often, and ever afresh, as He came to save him, to warn him, and even, at the last, to snatch him from the abyss; but who, on each occasion, in his pride, or in his already developed enmity for that which is of God, repelled the gracious hand, and on his own rebellious spirit made progress from evil to evil; who had, perhaps, never tasted the Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, but who had truly experienced their presence, and had trampled under foot the blood of Jesus Christ, and crucified the Son of God afresh. It must, consequently, be one within that sphere in which the influences of God's grace are most powerfully felt; not one from the midst of heathenism, not one out of that state of obscurity which borders on heathenism, but one out of the community of the pure Word of God—out of a Christian communion in which the pure light of the Gospel shines. For only there are felt the powers of grace in such a way that a human heart, be it ever so hard and proud, must either be melted or continue in an undecided and irresolute course until death; or finally—thanks be to God, an extremely rare case—must with consciousness, with resolute force of will, oppose everything which from Divine love seeks grace, mercy, deliverance to the poor sinner. On this account I say, that when the man of sin shall be revealed—at what hour is known only to the Lord—he will not come forth from a world of darkness, but will arise where the Gospel is preached, and many walk in the blessing and peace of it.

He is called the "son of perdition." What does this imply? Wherever in the Old or the New Testament this figure is used, and a man is called, for instance, a "son of the sword," or a "child of wisdom," there is understood by it, that he is one who derives his main characteristic from the sword, from war, from heroic courage and bravery—one to whom wisdom has given its peculiar impress. A child of God is one who is allied to God, because he is born of God—of the incorruptible seed of the Divine Word. The son of perdition is, consequently, a man upon whom eternal perdition, the condition of Satan and his angels—bitter enmity against God—has impressed the peculiar stamp of his being. The son of perdition is not, however, instantly recognized as such by every one. In our text the features of the man of sin are presented as they show themselves in the mirror of God's word, as they can be seen only by the spiritually-enlightened eye of a true Christian. When the world beholds nothing but splendor, power of human intellect and will, the opened eye of the true believer, experienced in the things of the kingdom of God—not merely the one endowed with much wisdom and natural understanding, but

Digitized by Google

even the simple one—perceives the fire of everlasting perdition gleaming behind. In the eyes of the child of God, the man of sin is a sinister, dark and gloomy form, whilst perhaps millions exult in him as an earthly God: for according to all that is afterwards written, we anticipate that he will not be one working secretly and in concealment, but one openly coming forth—one who exerts commanding influence in the world, has the earthly powers at his disposal, and knows how to apply all those means of fascination, which, unhappily, even in Christendom, are able to seduce millions of hearts from the simplicity which is in Christ, and to draw them into the way of perdition. An *adversary* he will appear to believers, whilst the majority of mankind will perhaps find him exceedingly agreeable; because his religion, his kingdom, his mode of action, is able to permit to the flesh all that it so greatly seeks; yea, perhaps, because the religion of the flesh is enthroned, and that which, according to the will of God, we should mortify and trample in the dust, is raised to the throne of dominion. Alas! on this account, many, many will fall down before him, will commit to him their hearts and their life, and by him will be drawn down to the abyss. To those, however, also, who have an eye enlightened by the Holy Spirit, he will be an opponent, an enemy, who seeks not God and the things of God, but himself and himself alone. In him the natural selfishness of the human heart, present in us all, will attain to its full expression, to its perfect realization. This he will be so far as we are able to express in the feeble language of men, the deep and mysterious hints of the spirit of prophecy; and, according to that which he is, will he do.

What will he do? The Apostle gives us the answer, "He will exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." Must we not, my beloved, shrink back in alarm at this description, if we at the same time cast a glance at our own age? Are there not many in it, among so-called cultured persons and others, who find no more the need of a God? Their art and skill, their thorough knowledge, their possessions, the ways opening up to them for increasing these possessions, their power, and the forces combining for its augmentation, are able to satisfy the wants of their life; and what may happen after—if there is, indeed, a hereafter—is a question ever unseasonable for them. Are there not those in our days who regard it as absurd that we should meet together to pray, to praise God, and to hear the word of the Cross—who do not hesitate to say to us, Christianity has outlived itself; it is a religion no longer adequate to the wants of the present day, and especially of *that* future to which we are unquestionably hastening? Have we not, consequently, to confess that the spirit which exalts itself above all that is called God or worship is already present?

And yet, I would not answer this question entirely in the affirmative. For only follow into the quiet pathways of their life those who so speak; enter into their chamber when their plans have been frustrated, their possessions are lost, when they lie sick and miserable upon their bed, and the supposed inexhaustible fountain of their spirits is dried up, the wing of the once so high-soaring courage has become powerless, and when the dark shadow of death and of threatening judgment, which man is no longer able to banish, fills their souls with gloomy terror;—then it is very different with them. If they do not even then stretch forth their hands towards the living God, and seek peace in the only one through whom peace is to be found, in the Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ, they at least cling, as we know, to all kinds of superstition. They do not, therefore, exalt themselves above all that is called God or is worshipped; but only, since they will not open their hearts to faith, become the slaves of superstition. And that is the fate of very many in our time, who are carried to and fro between unbelief and superstition, between levity and that which is not the true fear of God, but slavish dread of God. But, at any rate, there may and certainly will be gradually developed out of this present melancholy condition a new phase, in which many within the Protestant Church will at length emancipate themselves from superstition and will truly exalt themselves above all that is called God and wor-

Digitized by Google

ship, because they will no longer hear of doing service; they are strong, high-flown people, who have not learned to bow, and at most only do homage to the idol Mammon, in order to obtain something from him. To fall down before a Higher Power, which promises them nothing for the flesh, they have either not learnt, or have long ago unlearnt. From among them, first of all, will the man of sin, when he is revealed, gather his immediate followers, his most confidential servants; but he will not, as we have before mentioned, himself spring from their number, but out of the communion of those who have still the life of faith. But, we repeat, from among these lost ones, these unhappy ones—of whose blood, perhaps, none of us are entirely innocent, because we have by no means done all that we could to bring them within the influence of evangelical light and life—will he gather his first adherents.

But, now further. *How* will he exalt himself above all that is called God or is worshipped? Not by a pure denial, as many now suppose, of that which is Divine in general, but "he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Behold, my friends, the height of enmity against God. But does any self-seeking and self-love aim at anything short of making the self-seeking man the centre, the head of the world? All must serve him, all fall in with his inclinations and interests, all become only means in his hands; and the more widely he extends the circle of these means, the more men and things he makes his instruments, uses in the service of his pleasures, the greater he thinks himself, and the more is he admired and envied by thousands.

It has been from the beginning the innermost essence of sin, of self-seeking, that man will be as God. As long as he wishes only this, he is not clearly conscious of his own will. When he has attained this clearness—as this takes place in the man of sin—he will no longer wish to be *as* God and *with* God in equal power and glory, but he will be *God himself*. Beside him nothing any longer can appear great. If this is already the case with selfishness and sin, as it is now in the world; if this crushes and annihilates all around it, so far as it has the power, what will it be when once God's invisible hand, at the time He has reserved for himself, shall withdraw the barriers of the kingdom of darkness, and allow its floods to burst forth at the appearing of the man of sin? And how will the lesser and weaker selfishness of the majority attach itself to the greater one of this Ruler of Sin, and subordinate itself for the purpose of gaining the advantages he obtains?

In this we have the fearful image of a human form which has become one with the extreme manifestation of sin. We should certainly not dare to say that such a one will some day arise—a man will presume to take his seat in the temple of God, and to give himself out as God—if it were not written in the Book of God's prophecy, and if we could evade its plain declaration, or expound it otherwise than of an actual man. But the Apostle speaks so clearly and distinctly: the "man of sin"—a human person, who shall arise in the history of men upon earth—"the son of perdition, the opposer, will exalt himself above God, and that which is worshipped, and will profess that he is God," that we cannot, without doing violence to his words, think of anything else. You will, perhaps, say, That will be no historical person. If a man advances to such insanity of wickedness, that he, a feeble creature, frail and mortal like others, who lives his determinate number of years like ourselves, is subject to sickness and distress like one of us, proclaims that he is God, he will at all times be regarded as an unfortunate being, be pitied as one deprived of sound reason, and as such will be harmless. Yes, my friends, so, thanks be to God, would it be at present in our community. Not thus, however, will the man of sin begin; but, as we read in other prophecies, he will arise with powers and lying wonders: he will appear as a helper and deliverer of humanity; will perform those things for which the millions on earth have long sighed, in their race and struggle after unbroken earthly enjoyment, and unchecked toil for the increase of life's pleasure and life's splendor. Of him it will be said, Now at last has appeared that which the centuries have been longing for; now we

Digitized by Google

have found the key to all the products of human research for the alleviating and perfecting of the earthly life. And only when he has satisfied their fleshly desires, their hungering and thirsting after that which is transitory, will it gradually appear against what the force of his kingdom and his dominion is ultimately directed—against God; that at last beside him and above him the thought of a God is not to be tolerated. But one must either renounce all thought of God and of Divine things, of eternity, of prostration in the dust before the Omniscient and Holy One, or must stand forth the declared foe of this opponent. Here will the half-heartedness and indecision cease which now so widely prevails. It will be necessary to come to decision: either to be against God, an enemy of God, a subject of Antichrist, or a child of God.

Thus are we led to the question most important for us. It is true there is now no appearance of this, the last terrible development before the great day of the Lord, taking place in our lifetime; but we know not—no man is able to say—how many developments a decade of years may bring forth in the history of the world. Changes which once required the lapse of centuries for their introduction, now follow each other in rapid succession; and if just now it seemed as though the storm would sweep, in its course, over the earth, it is now suddenly stilled, and a time of quiet progress returns. But because we know not the time, we are called to a state of preparation. The Apostle did not without cause exhort his Thessalonians in our text: "Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you I told you these things?"

The Apostle had been but a very short time in Thessalonica, and in this short time he found it needful to present these things to the newborn communion of those who were just come to the faith. He must, therefore, have regarded it as of the highest importance that they should be prepared. How much less shall we be justified in declining the consideration of these things, and leaving unanswered the question, HOW MAY WE FIND PROTECTION AGAINST THE MAN OF SIN? To this I answer in few words. It will not be possible to obtain protection against him, for those who have not till then found protection, when the man of sin appears. For I have already remarked, the extreme of darkness, so far as this is possible in humanity, will not suddenly arise in it, but all will follow in a regular order of natural development, step by step; and he who has not before this open eyes, and regards not the signs of the time, nor looks into his own heart and continually seeks to know himself more fully in humility before the Lord, will infallibly be led to drink of the intoxicating draught of the flesh, and led away by the common delusion—will not then have his eyes open to recognize the man of sin, the Antichrist; but, once drawn within the reach of the vortex, will no longer have the power to escape therefrom.

One is protected against it only by recognizing in its true light all that is Antichristian. And how will you recognize that which is Antichristian in others—in the spirit of the age, in whole societies and schools of thought, if you do not distinguish in yourself flesh from spirit, nature from grace; if you do not discover what you are by nature, and what you would have become already, had not God, in unspeakable compassion, preserved you hitherto? And what would become of you if He should, from this moment, leave you to yourself? But if you daily renew this research, and become acquainted with your own heart and conscience, and contemplate yourself in the mirror of God's word, then will you become a poor sinner before God, and find no rest until you have found peace at the Cross in the forgiveness of your sins, and will daily experience the need of a renewed sealing of this forgiveness. Then you will be in earnest with your Christianity in heart and life, will be a child of God, and therefore will receive through the Holy Spirit opened eyes of the understanding. Then will you not merely recognize the fruit of darkness when it has come to maturity, but it will be discerned by you in its first budding, and you will distinguish the Christian from the Antichristian element in the present day, and will range yourself on the side of Christ in word and deed.

Thus, and only thus, are we secure. Then

Digitized by Google

let the power of seduction rise and swell as mightily as it will, and let the number of its adherents and the force of public opinion seem to be irresistible, you will stand firm, for you are in Christ Jesus the Lord. Everything depends upon the personal relation, the true communion of a soul with the Lord Jesus Christ. In this is the only safety. And then, when we are thus protected, shall we indeed regard the voice of prophecy, but not anxiously inquire whether he comes to-day or to-morrow—in what region, in what land, in what community, will the Antichrist arise. We shall above all things ever seek to distinguish in our sphere of life, in our day, in our common life, that which is against Christ, that which destroys the peace of God in Christ, which detracts from the honor of Jesus Christ, and which affords nourishment and support to the flesh—even under spiritual pretexts—from that which is for Christ and of Christ. But we must ever recall to mind this distinction, as the Apostle reminds his Church: "Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things?"

Editorial.

READ ISAIAH.

We commence, in this number of our serial, a new and critical translation of the prophecies of Isaiah. It is from Dr. Delitsch, of Germany, one of the ablest Hebraists and Christian scholars now living. The object aimed at is to give the reader the literal sense of the utterances of the inspired prophet, and thus to contribute to a better understanding of this grand evangelical seer. We have no doubt that our subscribers will thank us for thus furnishing them with the results of the great labors of this great scholar and commentator upon this part of Holy Scripture.

Isaiah, in any version, is particularly worthy of the study of Christians, and of all who wish to improve themselves in a right knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. His name signifies *the Salvation of Jehovah*, and the contents of his prophecies all crystallize around what is thus expressed in his name. They all look forward to the salvation wrought by God in Christ Jesus. He proclaims the advent of Jesus, His triumphs over His enemies, the recovery of exiled Israel, the emancipation of a captive world, and the everlasting peace and blessedness of those who believe in Him, and wait for Him.

To Isaiah, all dispensations reach their consummation in Christ. All earthly retributions, and all earthly restorations, are but the preliba-tions of what the great day of the Lord is to effect. His prophecies extend over more than twenty-five centuries. They reach from the days of Uzziah to the day of judgment. They point out the character and work of the glorious Messiah, and from the graces of the first advent he ever and anon rises to the glories of the second. So closely does he connect what pertains to both, and from the first so continually glances onward to the second, that it is sometimes difficult to draw the line between the two. The advent in humility is to him the eve of the advent of power and great glory, and the coming to judgment the noon of the coming in meekness and self-sacrifice.

The prophecies of Isaiah are also particularly applicable to our times. The state of Christendom now is remarkably analogous to the condition of the Hebrew people then. His descriptions, warnings, and exhortations, many of them, after so many ages, seem as if written especially for the present. The agitations, the on-coming wreck of kingdoms, the bringing down of the sons of pride, the nearing dissolution of the world itself, and the only salvation from the threatening ruin to which he so graphically alludes, have a present relation to us of great and striking significance. Nor can men and nations to-day do a better thing than to study, apply to themselves, and lay to heart, what God hath spoken, and still speaks, by the mouth of this holy prophet. At any rate, let

Digitized by Google

every one to whom this reproduction, in our tongue, of what has thus been recorded for our learning attentively examine it, and thoughtfully ponder it, as he hopes to be a partaker in that kingdom which cannot be moved.

THE WORD OF THE LORD.

God says of His Word: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." It is a blessed assurance, and a beautiful simile.

1. Rain and dew are reviving powers, wonderful in their quickening effects. They carry with them a resurrection force. They recall what had disappeared. They renew what had ceased to be. They start into vigorous and joyous life what was ready to perish. They make a new condition of being out of what they find. And the words of the Lord are spirit and life. They change and refashion the soul, the household, the community, which receives them and drinks them in. That which was dead is made alive again. Another being is superinduced. A fresh consciousness, a new activity, a renewed existence is awakened. Where there was barrenness, there is a putting forth for a happy fruitfulness. Where there was deadness, there springs up life. Where there was desolation, there is bloom and joy. Where there was rocky hardness and parched dryness, there is genial soil. Where there was dust and misery, there is purity and blessedness.

2. The dew and small rain are gentle in their operations. They never come in tempests. Dew forms under the wing of silence and quietude. It cometh not with observation. The quickest ear cannot hear its motions, and the clearest eye cannot detect the delicacy with which it nourishes and blesses. And yet, when the day dawns, the whole landscape is arrayed in its glittering wealth. God sometimes speaks in thunder and tempest, as the showers sometimes come; but mostly in quiet and gentleness. Elijah found the Lord, not in the great strong wind, not in the earthquake, not in the fire, but in "a still small voice." Not amid excitements and boisterous agitations, but in thoughtfulness and silence—not in uproar and wild confusion, but in solemn meditation, and the hidden places of prayer and calm soul-searching—does the life-giving power of God impart itself to willing hearts. When we withdraw ourselves from the noise and bustle of the world; when we calm our minds in solitude; when we quietly muse upon the great themes of what and where we are, whither we are going, and what is to become of us; when we lift our thoughts to God who made us and will judge us: these are the moments and attitudes in which the Spirit of God flows in upon our souls to quicken us unto salvation, and the word of eternal truth does its most effectual work.

3. Water is the great purifier. It is nature's bath, appointed for the cleansing of all creatures, and the cleansing of all physical pollution. Even the gentle dew and small rain wash off the dust that has collected on the parched grass, and make it pure and fresh again. And so the Lord cleanses men "with the washing of water by the Word." The Word—the Word—is God's moral sanctifier. "Sanctify them by Thy truth, Thy Word is truth." "Now ye are clean *through the Word* which I have spoken unto you." The Word of the Lord is pure; and where it enters and dwells, there is purity. It cleanses away the evil of the soul, and purges it of all its filthiness. It carries and imparts absolution, and separates between man and the defilements of earth and sin, so that the Apostle could say, "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

4. The rain does not come from the stars. The showers do not fall from other worlds. The dews are not imported from the distant heavens. All these blessed things are near us; they reside in our atmosphere, and have their source in what God has ordained for our own world. A little change in the temperature makes them ours. They are in continual readiness to drop in blessing upon the earth.

Digitized by Google

And the Word of God is like them. It is everywhere and always about us and in us, and ready to do all its offices of good upon us. "The Word is nigh thee; even in thy mouth and in thine heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." It surrounds us wherever we go, and needs only the right conditions in the temper of our souls in order to discharge all its treasures into our bosoms. If only the heat of fiery passions be put away, and the flare of this world and its noisy doings be shut out from the soul, and the calm glories of heaven be allowed to spread open their wonders to our contemplation, no matter where and when, there the dews of eternal life will distil in all their reviving freshness, and there the powers of God's salvation are, to touch with the life and cleansing of eternity.

5. The rain, the dew, the showers, are sent to render the earth fruitful. Their presence in their season causes the husbandman to look forward for a plentiful harvest. They moisten the furrows. They develop the springing germs. They nourish the growing plants. They perform a most important part in helping forward every valuable product. When God promised to be as the dew unto Israel, it was that the same might grow as the lily, and cast forth its roots as Lebanon, and spread his branches, and revive as the corn, and fill the face of the earth with beauty, fruit, and fragrance. And for the same is the Word of the Lord intended. God hath said of it: "As the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; *so shall my Word be.*" Whether we be lilies or olive-plants, vines or cedars, grain or grass, God's word is meant to impel and strengthen us to spiritual fruitfulness. It is for no other end, but that we should hear it, receive it, and bring forth fruit, walking worthy of the Lord in all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might according to His glorious power unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness, giving thanks to the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

6. Rain is not always comfortable while it is falling; but when it ceases, and the clouds clear away from the sky, everything thrills and dances with delight. The dew is chilling to earthly pursuits, and, while it is falling, darkness is upon the world; but when the bright beams of the daylight come, and the rising sun flashes on the hills, and its golden rays illuminate the valleys, it would seem as if an angel had oversown the fields with diamonds and hung a brilliant on every blade and leaf. The very air is redolent of heavenly fragrance; and the whole earth is breathless amid the songs and glories of a celestial baptism. And so there may be discomfort and darkness, clouds and gloom, while the word of the Lord is finding its way into our souls; but those clouds will soon clear away, and that night be over. And when the sunlight comes, and the day renews itself, and heavenly morning dawns, there shall come visions of beauty and experiences of good, beyond all present imaginings, and over which the universe will thrill with rejoicings at what the Word of the Lord, honestly received into the soul, has wrought. "O earth, earth, earth, hear the Word of the Lord!"

"It becomes us to inquire with deep concern whether God's people have not lost one of the most powerful motives to Christian life, by losing a vivid, a realizing faith in the personal return of Jesus Christ as possible at any time. At all events it is a fact which history clearly brings to light that in proportion as the Church has walked in close and loving fellowship with her Lord she has waited and watched for his advent, 'more than they that watch for the morning,' and in proportion as she has become corrupt in doctrine, formal in her service, and worldly in her ambition, this precious truth has been obscured or lost to her view."—*Brooks.*

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. IX. OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER, 1871. Nos. 10 & 11.

Special Contributions.

THE PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH.

A NEW AND CRITICAL TRANSLATION.

By Franz Delitzsch, D.D.

Appendix to the First Part and Prologue to the Second.—The Prophet's Ordination as the Preacher of Judgment.

Chapter VI.

The year that king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord of all sitting upon a high and exalted throne, and His borders filling the temple.

2. Above it stood seraphim: each one had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he did fly.

3. And one cried to the other, and said, Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts: filling the whole earth is His glory.

4. And the foundations of the thresholds shook with the voice of them that cried; and the house became full of smoke.

5. Then said I, Woe to me! for I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I am dwelling among a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.

6. And one of the seraphim flew to me with a red hot coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from the altar.

7. And he touched my mouth with it, and said, Behold, this has touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away; and so thy sin is expiated.

8. Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Behold me here, send me!

9. He said, Go and tell this people, Hear on, and understand not; and look on, but perceive not.

10. Make ye the heart of this people fatty, and their ears heavy, and their eyes sticky; that they may not see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and their heart understand, and they be converted, and one heal them.

11. Then said I, Lord, how long? Until towns are wasted without inhabitant, and houses are without man, and the ground shall be laid waste, a wilderness.

12. And Jehovah shall put men far away, and there shall be many forsaken places within the land.

13. And is there still a tenth therein, this also again is given up to destruction, like the terebinth and like the oak, of which, when they are cut down, only a root-stump remains: such a root-stump is a holy seed.

Part Second—The Book of the Consolation of Immanuel.

Chapter VII.

It came to pass, in the days of Abaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Aramea, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, and could not make war upon it.

2. And it was told the house of David, Aram has settled down upon Ephraim: then his heart shook, and the heart of his people, as trees of the wood shake before the wind.

Digitized by Google

3. Then said Jehovah to Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou and Shear-jashub thy son, to the end of the aqueduct of the upper pool, to the road of the fuller's field.

4. And say unto him, Take heed, and keep quiet; and let not thy heart become soft from these two smoking fire-brand stumps: at the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram, and the son of Remaliah,

5. Because Aram hath determined evil over thee, Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, saying,

6. We will march against Judah, and terrify it, and conquer it for ourselves, and make the son of Tab'el king in the midst of it:

7. Thus said the Lord Jehovah, It will not be brought about, and will not take place;

8. For the head of Aram is Damascus, and head of Damascus Rezin, and in five and sixty years will Ephraim as a people be broken in pieces.

9. And head of Ephraim is Samaria, and head of Samaria the son of Remaliah; if ye believe not, surely ye will not remain.

10. And Jehovah continued speaking to Ahaz as follows:

11. Ask thee a sign of Jehovah thy God, going deep down into Hades, or high up to the height above.

12. But Ahaz replied, I dare not ask, and dare not tempt Jehovah.

13. And he spake, Hear ye now, O house of David! It is too little to you to weary men, that ye weary my God also?

14. Therefore the Lord, He will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin conceives, and bears a son, and calls his name Immanuel.

15. Butter and honey will he eat, at the time that he knows to refuse the evil and choose the good.

16. For before the boy shall understand to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land will be desolate, of whose two kings thou art afraid.

17. Jehovah will bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days such as have not come since the day when Ephraim broke away from Judah—the king of Ashur.

18. And it comes to pass in that day, Jehovah will hiss for the fly which is at the end of the Nile-arms of Egypt, and the bees that are in the land of Ashur;

19. And they come and settle, and settle all of them in the valleys of the slopes, and in the clefts of the rocks, and in all the thorn-hedges, and upon all grass-plats.

20. In that day will the Lord shave with a razor, the thing for hire on the shore of the river, with the king of Ashur, the head and the hair of the feet; and even the beard it will take away.

21. And it will come to pass in that day, that a man will keep a small cow and a couple of sheep;

22. And it comes to pass, for the abundance of the milk they give he will eat cream: for butter and honey will every one eat that is left within the land.

23. And it will come to pass in that day, every place, where a thousand vines stood at a thousand silverlings, will have become thorns and thistles.

24. With arrows and with bows will men go, for the whole land will have become thorns and thistles.

25. And all the hills that were accustomed to be hoed with the hoe, thou wilt not go to them for fear of thorns and thistles; and it has become a gathering-place for oxen, and a treading-place for sheep.

Chapter VIII.

Then Jehovah said to me, Take a slab, and write upon it with common strokes, "In Speed, Spoil, Booty hastens;"

2. And I will take to me trustworthy witnesses, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.

3. And I drew near to the prophetess: and she conceived, and bare a son: and Jehovah said to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz (In-speed-spoil-booty-hastens):

4. For before the boy shall know how to cry, My father, and my mother, they will carry away the riches of Damascus, and the spoil of Samaria, before the king of Ashur.

Digitized by Google

5. And Jehovah proceeded still further to speak to me, as follows:

6. Forasmuch as this people despiseth the waters of Siloa that go softly, and regardeth as a delight the alliance with Rezin and the son of Remaliah.

7. Therefore, behold! the Lord of all bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, the mighty and the great, the king of Ashur and all his military power; and he riseth over all his channels, and goeth over all his banks;

8. And presses forward into Judah, overflows and pours outward, till it reaches the neck, and the spreading out of its wings fill the breadth of thy land, Immanuel.

9. Exasperate yourselves, O nations, and go to pieces; and see it, all who are far off in the earth! gird yourselves, and go to pieces; gird yourselves, and go to pieces!

10. Consult counsel, and it comes to nought; speak the word, and it is not realized: for with us is God.

11. For Jehovah hath spoken thus to me, overpowering me with God's hand, and instructing me not to walk in the way of this people, saying,

12. Call ye not conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy; and what is feared by it, fear ye not, neither think ye dreadful.

13. Jehovah of hosts, sanctify Him; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread.

14. So will He become a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence (vexation) to both the houses of Israel, a snare and trap to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

15. And many among them shall stumble, and shall fall; and be dashed to pieces, and be snared and taken.

16. Bind up the testimony, seal the lesson in my disciples.

17. And I wait upon Jehovah, who hides His face before the house of Jacob, and hope for Him.

18. Behold, I and the children which Jehovah hath given me for signs and types in Israel, from Jehovah of hosts, who dwelleth upon Mount Zion.

19. And when they shall say to you, Inquire of the necromancers, and of the soothsayers that chirp and whisper: Should not a people inquire of its God? for the living to the dead?

20. To the teaching of God (thorah), and to the testimony! If they do not accord with this word, they are a people for whom no morning dawns.

21. And it goes about therein hard-pressed and hungry; and it comes to pass, when hunger befalls it, it frets itself, and curses by its king and by its god, and turns its face upward.

22. And looks to the earth, and behold distress and darkness, benighting with anguish, and (itself) thrust out into darkness.

Chapter IX.

For it does not remain dark where there is now distress; in the first time He brought into disgrace the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphthali, and in the last he brings to honor the road by the sea, the other side of Jordan, the circle of the Gentiles.

2. The people that walk about in darkness see a great light; they who dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light shines.

3. Thou multipliest the nation, preparest it great joy; they rejoice before Thee like the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they share the spoil.

4. For the yoke of its burden and the stick of its neck, the stick of its oppressor, Thou hast broken to splinters, as in the day of Midian.

5. For every booty of those who tramp with boots in the tumult of battle, and cloak rolled in blood, shall be for burning, a food of fire.

6. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government rests upon His shoulder; and they call His name Wonder, Counsellor, mighty God, Eternal-Father, Prince of Peace.

7. To the increase of government, and to peace without end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to strengthen it, and to support it through judgment and righteousness from henceforth even forever. The jealousy of Jehovah of hosts will fulfil this.

8. The Lord sends out a word against Jacob, and it descends into Israel.

Digitized by Google

9. And all the people must make atonement, Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, saying in pride and haughtiness of heart, ten bricks are fallen down, and we build with square stones; sycamores are hewn down, and we put cedars in their place.

10. Jehovah raises Rezin's oppressor high above him, and pricks up his enemies:

11. Aram from the east, and Philistines from the west; they devour Israel with full mouth. For all this His anger is not turned away, and His hand is stretched out still.

12. But the people turneth not unto Him who smiteth it, and they seek not Jehovah of hosts.

13. Therefore Jehovah rooteth out of Israel head and tail, palm-branch and rush, in one day.

14. Elders and highly distinguished men, this is the head; and prophets, lying teachers, this is the tail.

15. The leaders of this people have become leaders astray, and their followers swallowed up.

16. Therefore the Lord will not rejoice in their young men, and will have no compassion on their orphans and widows; for all together are profligate and evil-doers, and every mouth speaketh blasphemy. With all this His anger is not turned away, and His hand is stretched out still.

17. For the wickedness burneth up like fire; it devours thorns and thistles, and burns in the thickets of the wood; and they smoke upwards in a lofty volume of smoke.

18. Through the wrath of Jehovah of hosts the land is turned into coal, and the nation has become like the food of fire: not one spareth his brother.

19. They hew on the right, and are hungry: and devour on the left, and are not satisfied: they devour the flesh of their own arm:

20. Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: these together over Judah. With all this His anger is not turned away, and His hand is stretched out still.

Chapter X.

Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and to the writers who prepare trouble;

2. To force away the needy from demanding justice, and to rob the suffering of my people from their rightful claims, that widows may become their prey, and they plunder orphans!

3. And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the storm that cometh from afar? To whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye deposit your glory?

4. There is nothing left but to bow down under prisoners, and they fall under the slain. With all this His anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

5. Woe to Ashur, the rod of mine anger, and it is a staff in their hand, mine indignation.

6. Against a wicked nation will I send them, and against the people of my wrath give them a charge, to spoil spoil, and to prey prey, to make it trodden down like street-mire.

7. Nevertheless he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; for it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few.

8. For he saith, Are not my generals all kings?

9. Is not Calno as Carchemish, or Hamath as Arpad, or Samaria as Damascus?

10. As my hand hath reached the kingdoms of the idols, and their graven images were more than those of Jerusalem and Samaria;

11. Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, do likewise to Jerusalem and her idols?

12. And it will come to pass, when the Lord shall have brought to an end all his work upon Mount Zion and upon Jerusalem, I will come to punish over the fruit of the pride of heart of the king of Ashur, and over the haughty look of his eyes.

13. For he hath said, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my own wisdom; for I am prudent: and I removed the bounds of the nations, and I plundered their stores, and threw down enthroned ones like a bull.

14. And my hand extracted the wealth of the nations like a nest; and as men sweep up forsaken eggs, have I swept the whole earth: there was none that moved the wing, and opened the mouth, and chirped.

15. Dare the axe boast itself against him

Digitized by Google

that heweth therewith, or the saw magnify itself against him that useth it? As if a staff were to swing those that lifted it up, as if a stick should lift up (the man who is) not wood.

16. Therefore will the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send consumption against his fat men; and under Ashur's glory there burns a brand like a firebrand.

17. And the light of Israel becomes a fire, and His Holy One a flame; and it sets on fire and devours its thistles and thorns in one day.

18. And the glory of his forests and his garden-ground will He destroy, even to the soul and flesh, so that it is as when a sick man dieth.

19. And the remnant of the trees of his forest can be numbered, and a boy could write them.

20. And it will come to pass in that day, the remnant of Israel, and that which hath escaped of the house of Jacob, will not continue to stay itself upon its chastiser, and will stay itself upon Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

21. The remnant will turn, the remnant of Jacob, to God the mighty.

22. For if thy people were even as the sea-sand, the remnant thereof will turn: destruction is firmly determined, flowing away righteousness.

23. For the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, completes the finishing stroke, and that which is firmly determined within the whole land.

24. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, My people that dwellest on Zion, be not afraid of Ashur, if it shall smite thee with the rod, and lift its stick against thee, in the manner of Egypt.

25. For yet a very little (and) the anger indignation is past, and my wrath turns to destroy them:

26. And Jehovah of hosts moves the whip over it, as He smote Midian at the rock of Oreb; and His staff stretches out over the sea, and He lifts it up in the manner of Egypt.

27. And it will come to pass in that day, its burden will remove from thy shoulder, and its yoke from thy neck; and the yoke will be destroyed from the pressure of the fat.

28. He comes upon Ayyath, passes through Migron; in Michmash he leaves his baggage.

29. They go through the pass; let Gebeah be our quarters for the night! Ramah trembles; Gibeah of Saul flees.

30. Scream aloud, O daughter of Gallim! Only listen, O Laish! Poor Anathoth!

31. Madmenah hurries away; the inhabitants of Gebim flee with their goods.

32. Even to-day he will halt at Nob; his hand swings over the mountain of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

33. Behold the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, lops down the branches with terrific force; and those of towering growth are hewn down, and the lofty are humbled.

34. And He fells the thickest of the forest with iron; and Lebanon, it falls by a Majestic One.

Chapter XI.

And there cometh forth a twig out of the stump of Jesse, and a shoot from its roots bringeth forth fruit.

2. And the Spirit of Jehovah descends upon Him, spirit of wisdom and understanding, spirit of counsel and might, spirit of knowledge and fear of Jehovah.

3. And fear of Jehovah is fragrance to Him; and He judges not according to outward sight, neither does He pass sentence according to outward hearing,

4. And judges the poor with righteousness, and passes sentence with equity for the humble in the land; and smites the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He slays the wicked.

5. And righteousness is the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His hips.

6. And the wolf dwells with the lamb, and the leopard lies down with the kid, and calf and lion and stalled ox together: a little boy drives them.

7. And cow and bear go to the pasture; their young ones lie down together: and the lion eats chopped straw like the ox.

8. And the suckling plays by the hole of the adder, and the weaned child stretches its hand to the eye of the basilisk-viper.

Digitized by Google

9. They will not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the land is filled with knowledge of Jehovah, like the waters covering the sea.

10. And it will come to pass in that day: the root-sprout of Jesse, which stands as a banner of the peoples, nations shall ask for it, and its place of rest is glory.

11. And it will come to pass in that day, the Lord will stretch out His hand again a second time to redeem the remnant of His people that shall be left, out of Ashur, and out of Egypt, and out of Pathros, and out of Ethiopia, and out of Elam, and out of Shinar, and out of Hamath, and out of the islands of the sea.

12. And He raises a banner for the nations, and fetches home the outcasts of Israel; and the dispersed of Judah will He assemble from the four extremities of the earth.

13. And the jealousy of Ephraim is removed, and the adversaries of Judah are cut off; Ephraim will not show jealousy towards Judah, and Judah will not oppose Ephraim.

14. And they fly upon the shoulder of the Philistines seawards; unitedly they plunder the sons of the East; they seize upon Edom and Moab, and the sons of Ammon are subject to them.

15. And Jehovah pronounces the ban upon the sea-tongue of Egypt, and swings His hand over the Euphrates in the glow of His breath, and smites it into seven brooks, and makes it so that men go through with shoes on.

16. And there will be a way for the remnant of His people that shall be left, out of Ashur, as it was for Israel in the day of its departure out of the land of Egypt.

Chapter XII.

And in that day thou wilt say, I thank Thee, O Jehovah, that Thou wast angry with me. Thine anger is turned away, and Thou hast comforted me.

2. Behold the God of my salvation; I trust, and am not afraid: for Jah Jehovah is my pride and song, and He became my salvation.

3. And with rapture ye will draw water out of the wells of salvation.

4. And ye will say in that day, Praise Jehovah, proclaim His name, make known His doings among the nations, boast that His name is exalted.

5. Harp to Jehovah; for He has displayed majesty: let this be known in all lands.

6. Shout, and be jubilant, O inhabitant of Zion! for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

THAT DAY.

Isaiah 2:10–22.

The approaching day of the Lord will be a terrible time upon all unpardoned sinners, but there are many intimations in the Scripture that it will be especially severe upon the proud and those who exalt themselves above the rest of humankind. Pride is the abominable thing which God hates, and yet there is no sin more common, and that manifests itself in a greater variety of forms, but that day is to prostrate every species of it in the dust. The cedars of Lebanon, whose towering heights aspire to touch Infinity's throne, secure in their own proud estimation, and in that of the lowly trees whose diminished heads bend humbly before them, shall be precipitated to the very depths of degradation and shame. What were the vines and brambles to them? From their lofty elevation they gazed contemptuously upon these, thinking them not worthy of their exalted notice, and saying confidently in their vain hearts, "I sit a queen, and shall not be moved. My natural gifts and my own ably conceived and well-directed efforts have placed me in the position that I properly occupy; inequalities must exist where there are so many discrepancies, and why should I be expected to stoop to the level of those miserable brambles? How could my refined and fastidious nature endure their vulgarity and coarseness? How could I enjoy their vapid and trivial conversation? What interest can I take in their puerile and commonplace pursuits? How can I tolerate their inelegant manners, or enjoy a mode of life that may be very well adapted to their inferior natures? It is right that distinctions should exist, for should I recognize

Digitized by Google

our common brotherhood and humanity by a gracious and affable demeanor, and by admitting them to the privileges of my home and my society upon some occasions, it would only be an injury to them, and it would be difficult to tell where to draw the dividing line. They will presume upon it, and become discontented with their proper sphere. They will aspire to cedar monopolies, and then must come an inevitable collision—an irrepressible conflict—for can the cedars be expected to favor an equal distribution of their exclusive rights and privileges?" Alas! for humanity! When God has so highly distinguished some of His creatures above others, simply for His own glory and their greater usefulness; and when we know that by His own providential decrees these mysterious inequalities must exist until the end of the world in its present evil form, that they should thus abuse His goodness by their supercilious deportment, pride, and want of feeling, instead of sympathizing with the lowly and unprivileged of earth, thus alleviating their sad condition and rendering it more tolerable to them.

But that day will bring to them a revelation of the ephemeral nature of their glory of which they never dreamed. The bramble had been accustomed to creep, and the vine to cling, but the cedar stood proudly erect, in towering solitary grandeur, and the sudden and unexpected prostration shall be overwhelming indeed. For *cedars* to seek shelter in the rocks, and to hide in the dust! That is humiliation indeed! That is a change of position and circumstances that could scarcely have been anticipated. How *can* their proud natures endure it? Ah, yes! pride may rupture a heart as well as grief. And, as even so overwhelming a catastrophe cannot humble these unbending natures, will they stoop to ask for mercy? Will they implore a remedy? Too late then will be all appeals even to Him whose compassion seems limitless; but even were hope's light still glittering before them, they would be too proud to accept its aid. Defiant and haughty to the last, they would only piercingly implore the rocks to fall upon them in their despair, and hide them from the presence of Him whom they have outraged. They will gladly seek the shelter they once despised, rather than turn to the living God in their extremity, but in vain.

And even the sturdy, ponderous oaks of Bashan shall be overturned. How they gloried in their strength, and prided themselves in their might. With what supreme contempt they regarded the helpless and disabled. With what impatience and positiveness was their physical disability denominated indolence; their languor, their weariness, characterized as want of energy. They disdained even the cedars, regarding them merely as ornamental cumberers of the ground, and thinking their intellectual power as of utter insignificance in comparison with their sturdy physical strength and vigor. That would do well enough to make a display with, but of what avail was it in the practical pursuits of life? How could their puny arms extract wealth from the soil, the forest, the mine? How could their useless occupations contribute to the material prosperity of mankind? In fact, instead of promoting the general good, they frittered away their time in dreams as to what their mighty intellect was going to accomplish for the race, and in writing treatises and essays that practical utilitarians could not even find time to read, and often with needful wants unsupplied, when properly directed physical labor might have secured to them, not only an abundance, but even a superfluity of all the good things requisite in this mortal state. They worked, they bustled, they fretted, scorning the quiet and the calm, whose unobtrusive efforts often accomplished far more than the ostentatious displays of toil by these pretentious oaks, but all these labors were only for the temporal good of themselves and others. The religious work of the poor little vines they regarded as only so much time spent in useless and visionary pursuits. If the enthusiasm and zeal they displayed in the prosecution of these ends were directed to some practical purpose, some enterprise for the public good, or some undertaking for their own material profit, they might expect to accomplish something; but they are only in the way of the public-spirited and the enterprising, sharing largely in the consumption of what they have failed to assist in producing. These substantial, self-satisfied,

Digitized by Google

prosperous oaks, are even more merciless towards the sensitive, delicate vines and the lowly brambles than even the haughty cedars. The latter simply neglect, and are supercilious towards them; but the oaks cannot be satisfied to let them alone. They must be *compelled* to see what is for their own interests, and engage with bustling activity in all the pursuits that their self-appointed custodians dogmatically decide to be the best, even though they sink beneath these efforts in the toilsome race. And, when they do thus sink, how contemptuously they regard the poor feeble ones, declaring that they have no perseverance, no energy, no desire to succeed, and impatiently protesting that they cannot lend their ponderous trunks for such useless vines to cling to. But what saith the Lord? "He shall have judgment without mercy that showed no mercy," and, "with whatsoever measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again." Perhaps no retribution may come until the awful day of the Lord, but *then*, even the apparently impregnable oaks shall "enter into the rock, and hide in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty."

And then, too, a more noble species of pride, but not less reprehensible, shall be abased and humbled in the same dust. Those who pride themselves upon their genealogy, their ancestry, the achievements or position of their progenitors ages ago, and who suppose themselves to be formed of a superior clay to the rest of mankind. We censure not those who are glad and grateful that they can truly claim a long line of virtuous and pious ancestors, whose

> "Boast is not that they deduce their birth
> From loins enthroned, or rulers of the earth;
> But higher far their proud pretensions rise,
> The sons of parents passed into the skies."

This is a noble and legitimate feeling, and it cannot be characterized as pride; for it is painful in the extreme for one comparatively unsullied to be allied with guilt and shame; to feel that disgrace and dishonor taints his blood, transmitted though it may be from a remote source, and although it may have flowed through purer channels ere it reached him.

But there are those who boast of their descent from freebooters and desperadoes, because they have made themselves notorious or distinguished by their crimes, and because they secured a vast amount of worldly prosperity and prominence by their violence, oppression of the defenceless, and disregard of laws, human and divine. They were successful, because might was right with them; and now, their descendants forget the rock whence they were hewn, glorying in what ought to be their shame, looking with disdain upon those who would regard such an origin with horror, and imagining that the lapse of centuries has cast a lustre over crimes that would now consign the perpetrators to the state prison or the gallows.

But what an overturning there will be on that fearful day! How little will they think of their ancestors then! How glaringly will shine forth their revolting crimes, and they will feel that their illustrious descent will not exempt them from the doom of the potsherds of the earth. They will writhe in the dust upon a common level with those whom they so despised, and will even condescend to implore their aid in their adversity; but no human aid shall then avail, and all shall be engulfed in the same ruin.

And even the most ignoble pride of all—purse-pride—shall then meet its doom. Its effects have been less disastrous perhaps upon others than that of other kinds of pride, and its subjects have been far more seriously injured themselves by it than those towards whom it was manifested. As they were incapable of a high feeling or a noble aspiration, personal fear and despair will alone sway them on that day, when the Lord shall arise to shake terribly the earth, and overthrow the proud, the haughty, the selfish, and the merciless. Their silver and their gold shall then be consumed, and, as they were their only possessions, how poverty-stricken they will be indeed. The loss of these will at first affect them more than their own danger; but, as they will at last realize that even their vanished wealth cannot purchase a release from their doom, they are overwhelmed with horror. They discover then that they are indeed "wretched, poor, and blind."

Digitized by Google

Yes, all, all shall be prostrated, and the Lord alone exalted, in that day. All idols shall be overturned, and even Science and Reason—the gods of those who esteem themselves wise, but who are fools in the things of God, to use the strong language of Scripture, shall descend ignominiously from their pedestals, and their almost insane votaries shall crouch in the dust beside them.

All will be upon a common level, and their doom will be a common one. Feeling their interests then to be identical, they will seek to aid each other, and they will flock to the mountains and the hills, "to the high towers and the fenced walls." They will feel themselves secure there. Surely nature's fortifications are impregnable. Who can storm the mountains? Who can make a breach in their invulnerable sides? Upon their lofty summits they can look down in safety and with scorn upon the devastations of the valleys and the plains, and defy even the hosts who shall descend with the King of kings. The "munitions of rocks" cannot be overturned, but how dreadful to discover that the day of the Lord is to come even upon them. "The mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed;" even the solid rock shall be dissolved by the same heat that melts the elements.

Some, in human confidence, shall seek the "high towers and fenced walls," which the highest military science had rendered impervious to all attacks. They had vaunted themselves upon the fact that knowledge had increased; that education was civilizing and enlightening the world; and that human efforts and progress would eventually eradicate all traces of the fall. They prided themselves that man was made only a little lower than the angels, and that his wondrous development had quite placed him above the angelic host. They needed no superhuman aid, not even that of God himself, and they arrogantly claimed that they would attain the height of all good by their own mighty intellect. And some, who imagined that they were developed from the lowest orders of nature into high intellectual beings, were convinced that the developing process, although seemingly stationary for so long a period, would yet transform them into beings who could control all the forces of nature. And so they trusted in the artificial fortresses, in their elaborate scientific defences; but the downfall was only the deeper and the more overwhelming.

Even the ships of Tarshish, which had sought every accessible part of the globe with their manufactures and merchandise, and which had thought that they indeed ruled the waves, shall sink like a millstone in the depths of the ocean. All beautiful works of art; all that is bright, pleasant, and fair, of simply human production, shall be swept to destruction in the great day of the Lord, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth; to make way for a *superhuman* recreation, which shall endure throughout endless generations. Therefore "cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" M. E. S.

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

DID CHRIST ASCEND TO HEAVEN THE MOMENT HE EXPIRED ON THE CROSS?

[From a letter from a gentleman in Philadelphia to his friend in Illinois.]

You have asked me to keep you informed of everything new that transpires in the religious world. This is not an easy task; for,

"This is the patent age of new inventions."

Wonderful "new discoveries and inventions" (so-called) are every day presented to our attention! Old things are being done away, and, it would seem, as if all things were about to become new!

Not only in the arts and sciences, but even in the doctrines of the Christian religion, have men, in these days, "sought out many inventions." We Protestants have happily got rid of much of the lumber of the Church of Rome; the belief in purgatory, for one thing. We talk no longer of being

"—— Confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in our days of nature,
Be burned and purged away."

Digitized by Google

Purgatory has had its day. The witty Father O'Leary, when discussing the question of its existence with a Protestant clergyman, wound up by saying: "I perceive you are very much dissatisfied with purgatory, the half-way house as you call it; but allow me to tell you, *you may go farther and fare worse;*" and this is, perhaps, the very best thing that could be said of it! We have given up purgatory, seeing that it had no foundation to rest upon in the Bible. We have long ago been challenged to give up the belief in a hell; and in the existence of such a being as the devil; and *now* we are asked to say there is no place of departed spirits! all of which we Christians, educated in the old school, conceive to be as plainly taught in the Scriptures as that there is a God. The old Scotchwoman, that lamented that the belief of "the good people," in witches, fairies, kelpies, and such like, had already, in her day, been abandoned, and said that "she wad na wonder if in time folks wad cease to believe in a deil," would have had her anticipations more than realized had she lived till our day.

Archbishop Whately says: "I have seen a book in which the author reports of some acquaintance of his, that, on being asked by some one whether he did not believe in the Devil, he answered, 'Oh no! I believe in God, don't you?'" and on it the Bishop remarks, "This seems to be about as wise as if on being asked, 'Do you not believe in the existence of sickness?' he had replied, 'Oh no! I believe in health, don't you?'"

A belief in the existence of heaven—a place of perfect and unending happiness and pleasure—seems to be universal.

Where can we find in any Christian land a human being, however guilty, depraved, oppressed, or miserable, who does not believe there is a heaven—a place of everlasting joy and felicity—and say that he hopes to get there after all his sufferings and sorrows in this world are at an end; but in what way he is to do so may not be very clear even to his own mind.

That there is a God, a heaven, a hell, and (perhaps?) a devil, is still generally, if not universally, believed by those calling themselves Christians; but how long it may be so we know not.

Certain teachers of the present day think they have discovered new lights, and call upon us to give up (among other things) the belief in that intermediate state where, as we have been accustomed to suppose, the souls of men remained from the time of their separation from the body until the day of the general resurrection.

They confidently assure us that there is no such intermediate *place* or *state;* and that *no time* intervenes between the departure of the soul from the body and its admission into the place of its final destination; into heaven, the place of eternal rest and happiness, in the case of the righteous; or into hell, the place of everlasting torment, in the case of the wicked. And the questions now asked by the followers of these new teachers are: "How far is it to heaven?" "What time does it take the soul after its departure from the body to get there?"

In this patent age of new inventions, we should not be surprised to see a map of the roads and distances by which the soul must travel in its *ascent*, or *descent* (the "half-way house" being of course omitted), and proposals, issued by some enterprising speculator, for laying a railroad, of broad or narrow gauge, to expedite the conveyance of passengers as speedily as possible to the heavenly station! It is not to be presumed that people would be in a hurry to get to the *other* place. (Levity on such serious subjects as these ought not to be indulged; yet who can repress it when such ridiculously absurd questions are seriously propounded?)

It would be unjust, perhaps, and certainly unchristian, to say that these teachers preach what they do not themselves believe. Far be it from me to think so. One of them I know to be a truly sincere and pious man; too apt, it may be, to be led away by butterfly notions without considering where they may carry him; but, certainly, incapable of wilfully misleading or deceiving others.

We are told that Christ ascended to heaven the moment He expired upon the cross. The words He spake to Mary, in the garden, on the

Digitized by Google

morn of His resurrection (John 20:17), "I am not yet ascended to my Father," have been instanced to prove the contrary; and it will require a great deal of sophistry, and many new translations, to set aside that point-blank evidence. But there are many other passages that give evidence to the same effect. In John 14:2, we read, "In my Father's house are many mansions;" . . . "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."*

If, then (as the teachers of these new doctrines assert), Christ ascended to heaven the moment He expired upon the cross, He must have gone there, according to His promise, to prepare a place for His disciples. That He "came again" when He rose from the dead and showed Himself, from time to time, for forty days, it is presumed these teachers will not deny. Granting, then, these things to have happened exactly as they state, we ask, Did Christ in that case fulfil the promise He made to His disciples? Did He take any of them with Him when He ascended from the mount at the end of the forty days? Not one! According to their own statement then, He *had* gone to heaven to prepare a place for His disciples, under an express promise that when He came again He would take them with Him; and *had* come again; and *returned* to heaven again, and yet *had not performed His promise!!* Can we admit this? Nay, verily; "Let Christ be true and every man a liar." It follows, therefore, that Christ did not ascend to heaven from the cross, and had not "come again" when He rose from the dead, and that the time of His coming to receive His people to Himself is still in the future.

One of these teachers says: "From the lowest depth of human ignominy He" (Christ) "went up with His cross-scarred, and once buried body, to the highest glory of heaven;" from which we are compelled to infer that He ascended the first time, from the cross, "out of the body," and the second time, from the mount, "in the body." Yet the inspired writers mention but *one* ascension—that from the mount! In Hebrews 9:28, we read "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the *second* time without sin unto salvation."

Now, beyond controversy, His first appearance was, when "for us men, and for our salvation, He came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate."

He was once offered, He shall die no more. He has borne away the sins "of all," and what He has done once, shall stand forever. Yet He will appear a second time without sin; *i. e.*, without any further offering for sin, that He has already made. At His first appearance He was our sacrifice for sin; but at His second He shall come to bestow that salvation which the sacrifice of Himself, at His first coming, purchased for all that trust in, and expect it from Him; to deliver the *bodies* of believers from the empire of death, reunite them to their purified souls, and bring both into his eternal glory. This is salvation.

But mark the saying, "He shall appear *the second time.*" Does it not mean that He had not appeared the second time when the Epistle was written? Assuredly it does. But if He ascended to heaven from the cross, as our new teachers assert, He must have appeared the second time on the morning He arose from the dead, and the author of the Epistle should have written, "He shall appear the *third* time without sin unto salvation." The two statements are irreconcilable; which shall we accept? As the Epistle was composed by an inspired Apostle, our new teachers must pardon us if

* (In Campbell's "Translation of the Four Gospels," a work so highly esteemed by the learned for its literal following of the original text, we have it translated thus: "I go to prepare a place for you; and after I have gone and prepared a place for you, I will return and take you with me, that where I am, there ye also may be," and this, no doubt, was precisely the meaning our Lord wished to convey to His disciples.) These are Christ's own words; and we know that "though heaven and earth shall pass away, His word shall never pass away."

Digitized by Google

we accept His statement in preference to theirs; and in so doing we must necessarily reject the idea that Christ ascended to heaven from the cross and returned to the earth on the morning of His resurrection. We are taught to believe that the Son of God is "perfect God and perfect man. Equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead; and inferior to the Father, as touching His manhood. Who, although He be God and man, yet is not two, but *one Christ*." I doubt then if we are at liberty to imagine that Christ ascended to heaven "out of the body," as He must have done if He went up from the cross. I challenge these new teachers to point out any passage in the Scriptures that would justify such a belief. When He ascended from the mount He went up, the Godhead and manhood united—*one Christ*—and we have no account of His having ascended at any other time. . . .

They say Christ's promise to His disciples did not mean that He would "come again" *visibly*, and "receive them to Himself" *openly*. Not at all! but that He would *send a messenger to call them!* "On some day," says one of them, "the message will come to each disciple from his ascended Lord: 'To-day you shall be with Me in paradise.'" Very beautiful and poetic, certainly!

> "Hark, they whisper; angels say,
> Sister spirit, come away!"

But where are the grounds for all this in Scripture? When Christ said, "*I will come again*," we have no authority to say that He meant, "I will *send a message*."

We, who have been educated by old school teachers, cannot accept this sending "a message" in a secret manner, by an unseen messenger (even admitting that such message be sent "*to each disciple*," which may well be *doubted*), as the fulfilment of His promise that *He* would come again and receive us unto himself.

According to His promise, and the teachings of His Apostles, we look for a glorious appearance—a *personal* coming—with "power and great glory," and all His holy angels with Him; and *then*, and not till then; do we expect the promise made to His disciples to be fulfilled: "Come, ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom *prepared for you*."

That Christ "descended into hell," after His death, they utterly deny. The words of David, in Psalm 16:10, quoted by Peter, Acts 11:31, to wit: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption," they tell us should be translated so as to read, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in"—the state of the dead—or the grave; or, "Thou wilt not leave my soul"—ME—my person, my humanity, body, and reasonable soul,—under the power of death in the grave. "Neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One"—ME—myself, "to see corruption."

Let us bear in mind that the body and soul of Christ are spoken of by David and Peter, as existing separately and distinctly from each other after His death; the prophecy being, that the *one* should not be left in hell, nor the *other* suffered to see corruption.

The Scriptures assure us most distinctly, that it was not possible for the body of Christ to be holden by death, or to see corruption. "He, being conceived without sin, neither partook of human corruption, nor was involved in the condemnation of human nature;" consequently it was impossible for His body to *see corruption;* and it could not have undergone the *temporary* death to which it was not naturally liable, had it not been for the purpose of making an atonement. It was therefore impossible, that the human nature of our Lord could be subject to *corruption;* for though it was possible that the soul and it might be separated for a time, yet as it had not sinned it was not liable to dissolution: and its immortality was the necessary consequence of its being pure from transgression.

When we read the words of Peter in the 24th verse of the 11th chapter of the Acts, and the extract I have just given from the writings of an eminent scholar and divine (and numerous other passages from the Bible might be quoted to the same effect), I think, we have seen enough to convince us that the *body* of Our Lord did not see corruption, and was not liable to dissolution.

Digitized by Google

This point being settled, it remains for us to ascertain what the Prophet and Apostle understood, and what we should understand, by the words "Thou wilt not leave my *soul* in hell." Our new teachers say, the passage should read "Thou wilt not leave my soul in"—the state of the dead, or the grave;—or, "Thou wilt not leave my soul"—under the power of death in the grave. To a plain mind like mine this is utterly incomprehensible!

If it was not possible that the body of Christ should be holden by death, and see corruption, much less possible was it (if I may be allowed the expression), that His *soul*, or any soul of man, should ever be in, or be left in, "the state of the dead, or the grave,"—or "under the power of death in the grave."

"The soul, secured in her existence,
Smiles at the king of terrors, and defies his power."

(I speak, of course, of temporal, not of eternal death; for no one, believing the Scriptures, will deny that God is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.) I confess, I am unable to perceive how *death* or the *grave* ever could have any power over the *soul* of any man; and least of all over the soul of Christ. We rejoice to know that our blessed Lord "burst the bars of death, and triumphed o'er the grave," giving us assurance thereby that death and the grave should not have dominion over our *mortal bodies*, and enabling his followers to exclaim,

"O death! where is thy sting?
O grave! where is thy victory?"

but that the grave or death ever had any power to hold the *soul*, is, to my mind, an absurd idea. . . .

Confining my remarks to the consideration of the question of the existence of an intermediate state, I find many passages of Scripture, which I conceive prove it beyond doubt, by necessary implication. Criminal lawyers tell us that an unbroken chain of circumstantial evidence is more to be relied upon than the most positive testimony of living witnesses. The evidence of the latter may be false, *in toto*, but the other cannot lie.

In 1 Peter 3:18, 19, we read that Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: "by which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, which sometimes were disobedient . . . in the time of Noah, &c.;" and in Jude, that the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, "are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." I ask, is not the existence of an intermediate state plainly taught in these two passages? Of the disobedient ones of whom Peter writes, one of these teachers says: "Peter tells us, they were those who lived in the time of Noah, and perished for their disobedience, and, *at the time of his*" (Peter's) "writing were spirits *in prison, reserved like the fallen angels unto judgment.*"

To my mind this is a plain admission (though, no doubt, an *unintentional* one), that there *is* an intermediate state.

Reserved in chains, says the inspired writer. Reserved—where? Does not the word mean *kept back—withheld—kept in reserve* for further determination and disposal? In the case of the persons here spoken of, kept back until the judgment of the great day, when they shall receive their final and irrevocable sentence, and, of necessity kept back, in some intermediate place and state. We are all familiar with the routine in which justice is administered in our courts of law. We know that when a man is found guilty by a jury, he is committed to the custody of the sheriff, taken to jail, and *reserved* (in chains, perhaps) until the day of judgment, when he is again brought into court to have sentence pronounced upon him.

This is a familiar illustration of what Peter and Jude tell us in the passages quoted: and I ask any candid man if they do not prove, by necessary implication, the existence of an intermediate state?

When the doctrines that have been handed down to us from the early days of Christianity are openly assailed, and attempted to be undermined, how fervently should we pray,

"From all false doctrine, heresy, and schism, good Lord deliver us!"

O. P. Q.

Digitized by Google

THE DOOM OF BABYLON.

REV. 19.

O CITY of the seven hills,—
O Babylon the great!
The Angel of the Trumpet sounds
Thy fast-approaching fate.

Thy triple chains that long have held
The world of mind in thrall,
Are severed—and thy ghostly throne
Is "tottering to its fall!"

Thy voice of fulminating wrath,
Can never more alarm;
Nor thy seductive, siren tones,
The human conscience charm!

Thy smile or frown, O guilty Queen,
Men neither court nor dread;
Thy curses, uttered, shall rebound
On thine own Gorgon head!

O "cage of every unclean bird,"
Of spirits foul and dark,—
Upon thy brazen brow I see
Scars of the Prophet's mark!

O city that so long hath ruled
Supreme o'er land and sea,
The dregs you forced the world to drink,
Shall be wrung out to thee!

O skeleton of queenly power,
Dim phantom of the past,—
The horoscope foretold thy doom;
Thy life is waning fast.

The "*mene tekel*" on thy walls,
By mystic fingers traced,
In deep-illuminated lines,
Can never be erased!

Thy midnight reign will soon be o'er,
Thy kingdom broke in twain;
And the sceptre, passing from thy hand,
Shall ne'er be grasped again!

Usurper of thy Master's seat!
Thy haughty head shall bow;
For the Judgment fires the prophet saw,
Are kindling in thee now.

Denuded of thy royal robes,
Uncrowned by God's decree,
The burning arrows of His wrath
Will soon descend on thee!

Her "princes" and her "merchantmen"
Have gnawed their tongues with rage,
As they see the shifting shadows pass
From prophecy's dark page.

Soon shall we hear the angel's cry
Echoed around the world,
"From her proud seat of dragon power
Great Babylon is hurled!"

Prostrate beneath Messiah's heel,—
Crushed by His "iron rod,"
The hoary-headed harlot writhes,
Beneath the power of God!

"Drunk with the blood of martyred saints,"
I heard the angel say,
"In one brief hour thy plagues have come,
Thy glory passed away!"

FLORENCE.

Selections.

THE IMPENDING CRISIS.

I HAVE long felt it is one of the greatest shortcomings of the Church of Christ, that we ministers do not preach enough about the advent of Christ, and that private believers do not think enough about it. A few of us here and there receive the doctrine, and profess to love it; but the number of such persons is comparatively very small. And after all, we none of us live on it, feed on it, act on it, work from it, take comfort in it, as much as God intended us to do. In short, the bridegroom tarries, and we *slumber and sleep.*

It proves nothing against the doctrine of Christ's second coming and kingdom, that it has sometimes been fearfully abused. I should like to know what doctrine of the gospel has not been abused.

It proves nothing against the second advent of Christ, that those who hold the doctrine differ among themselves on many particular points in prophecy. Such differences need never stumble any one who recollects that unity on great points is perfectly consistent with disagreement on small ones.

It proves nothing against the doctrine that

Digitized by Google

it is encompassed with many difficulties. This I fully concede. The order of events connected with our Lord's coming, and the manner of His kingdom, when it is set up, are both deep subjects, and hard to be understood. But I firmly believe that the difficulties connected with any other system of interpreting unfulfilled prophecy are just twice as many as those which are said to stand in our way. I believe too that the difficulties connected with our Lord's second coming are not half so many as those connected with His first, and that it was a far more improbable thing, "*a priori*," that the Son of God should come to *suffer* than it is that he should come to *reign*. And after all, what have we to do with the "how," and "in what manner" prophecies are to be fulfilled? Is our miserable understanding of what is possible to be the measure and limit of God's dealings? The only question we have to do with is, "Has God said a thing?" If he has, we ought not to doubt it shall be done.

For myself, I can only give my own individual testimony; but the little I know experimentally of the doctrine of Christ's second coming makes me regard it as most practical and precious, and makes me long to see it more generally received.

And now, is there any one among the readers of this who cannot receive the doctrine of Christ's second advent and kingdom? I invite that man to consider the subject calmly and dispassionately. Dismiss from your mind traditional interpretations. Separate the doctrine from the mistakes and blunders of many who hold it. Do not reject the foundation because of the wood, hay, and stubble which some have built upon it. Do not condemn it and cast it aside because of injudicious friends. Only examine the texts which speak of it as calmly and fairly as you weigh texts in the Romish, Arian, or Socinian controversies, and I am hopeful as to the result.

I suspect there is a vague notion floating in men's minds that the present order of things will not end quite so suddenly. Men cling to the idea that there will be a kind of Saturday-night in the world,—a time when all will know the day of the Lord is near; a time when all will be able to cleanse their consciences, look out their wedding garments, shake off their earthly business, and prepare to meet their God. If any reader of this has such a notion, I charge him to give it up. If anything is clear in unfulfilled prophecy, this one fact is clear, that the Lord's coming will be sudden, and take men by surprise. And any view of prophecy which destroys the possibility of its being sudden,—whether by interposing a vast number of events as yet to happen, or by placing the millennium between ourselves and the advent—any such view appears to my mind to carry with it a fatal defect. Everything which is written in Scripture on this point confirms the truth that Christ's second coming will be sudden. "As a snare shall it come," says one place. "As a thief in the night," says another. "As the lightning," says a third. "In such an hour as ye think not," says a fourth. "When shall they say peace and safety," says a fifth. (Luke 21:35; 1 Thess. 5:2; Luke 17:24; Matt. 24:44; 1 Thess. 5:2.)

Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself uses two most striking comparisons when dwelling on this subject. Both are most touching, and both ought to raise in us solemn thoughts. In one he compares His coming to the days of Lot. In the days when Lot fled from Sodom, the men of Sodom were buying and selling, eating and drinking, planting and building. They thought of nothing but earthly things; they were entirely absorbed in them; they despised Lot's warning; they mocked at his counsel. The sun rose on the earth as usual. All things were going on as they had done for hundreds of years. They saw no sign of danger. But now mark what our Lord says: "The same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." (Luke 22: 28–30.)

In the other passage I allude to, our Lord compares his coming to the days of Noah. Do you remember how it was in Noah's day? Stay a little, and let me remind you. When the flood came on the earth in Noah's time, there was no appearance beforehand of anything so

Digitized by Google

awful being near. The days and nights were following each other in regular succession. The grass, and trees, and crops were growing as usual. The business of the world was going on. And though Noah preached continually of coming danger, and warned men to repent, no one believed what he said. But at last, one day the rain began and did not cease; the waters rose and did not stop; the flood came and swelled, and went on, and covered one thing after another, and all were drowned who were not in the ark. Now mark what our Lord says: "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it also be in the days of the Son of man: they did eat; they drank; they married wives; they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all." (Luke 17: 26, 27.) The flood took the world by surprise,—so also will the coming of the Son of man. In the midst of the world's business, when everything is going on just as usual,—in such an hour as this the Lord Jesus Christ will return.

Reader, the suddenness of the Lord's second advent is a truth that should lead every professing Christian to great searchings of heart. It should lead him to serious thought, both about himself and about the world.

Think for a moment how little the world is prepared for such an event. Look at the towns and cities of the earth and think of them. Mark how most men are entirely absorbed in the things of time and utterly engrossed with the business of their callings. Banks, counting-houses, shops, politics, law, medicine, commerce, railways, banquets, balls, theatres, each and all, are drinking up the hearts and souls of thousands, and thrusting out the things of God. Think what a fearful shock the sudden stoppage of all these things would be, the sudden stoppage which will be in the day of Christ's appearing.

Look at the rural parishes of such a land as ours, and think of them. See how the minds of the vast majority of their inhabitants are buried in farms and allotments, in cattle and corn, in rent and wages, in rates and tithes, in digging and sowing, in buying and selling, in planting and building. See how many there are who evidently care for nothing, and feel nothing, excepting the things of this world.

Consider your own house, your own family, your own fireside. What will be found there should Christ now come? Is everything in order for the Master's return?

Alas! how few believers live like men who wait for their Master's return! Is it not true that there are many hearts among God's children which are not quite ready to receive Jesus? Oh, believing reader, it ought not so to be! We want more of a pilgrim's spirit; we ought to be ever looking for and hastening to our home. We ought to be saying daily, "Come, Lord Jesus, let thy kingdom come." We ought to set Christ's advent continually before our eyes. We ought to say to ourselves every morning, "The Lord will soon return," and so be ready to meet Him.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

1. Is it not evident to the most casual observer, that these are times of *excessive worldliness?* Gain and gayety are the two grand idols of the age. Together they enthral the hearts, absorb the energies, and command the homage of the multitude. Everywhere men are in haste to be rich, and utterly unscrupulous as to the means used to secure the boon. Health is imperilled, physical and mental powers are overtaxed, conscience stifled, character and reputation sacrificed, and most of all to be deplored, the eternal welfare of the soul neglected, in order to gratify a towering ambition, or an insatiable avarice. This spirit is seen in the unseemly scramble for office, in the shameless abuse of power, in the eager pursuit of pleasure, in the prevalence of reckless speculation and grasping selfishness, and in extravagant expenditure of money on costly furniture, needless luxuries, and superfluous dress —in the latter instance not only despising Christian simplicity, but in many cases outraging all propriety and good taste, and displaying complete disregard to health and comfort, so that homage may be rendered at the shrine of fashion. This evil saps the very foundations of society, and awakens suspicion and distrust.

Digitized by Google

It often sunders the dearest and tenderest ties, while it perverts and degrades the noblest gifts. It is especially fraught with peril to man's spiritual welfare. Its very essence is forgetfulness of God, and of eternity. Of it comes science without faith, politics without principle, business without conscience, literature without holiness, pleasure without purity, in short, man without God. It invades even the sanctity of the Christian church, to tarnish its purity and impair its strength. It produces among professing Christians a regard for talent, rather than piety; for costly church edifices, wealthy congregations, and showy forms, rather than the simplicity of Christ, the spirituality of the believer, and the rescue of sinners from eternal perdition. To a Christian mind such a spectacle is truly painful. To note its character and effects, and apply its remedy, is the aim of all who desire the true prosperity of our country, and the eternal well-being of souls.

2. Are not these, also, times of *widespread immorality?* This may be inferred from what we have already observed. For where there is excess in worldliness, there will invariably be laxity in morals. If, instead of immutable truth, high-toned principle, and a regard for the general weal, society is governed by time-serving expediency, self-interest, and sensual gratification, then it must become essentially corrupt; evil of every grade must flourish and prevail. Is it not even so in our midst? We appeal to the state of things around us for proof. What do we see? Wickedness in high places and in low places, in legislative halls, and in judicial courts, in stately mansions and in wretched hovels, in educated and refined society, among the ignorant and debased. What do we see? Suicide treading in the steps of murder; drunkenness, profanity, and Sabbath desecration jostling each other; the innocent and unwary decoyed from the paths of virtue and honor to a course of infamy and shame; life and property constantly imperilled; and crime following crime in quick and alarming succession. What do we see? Speculation tampering with dishonesty, and bribery catering to theft; the public purse rifled for private or party ends, or for sectarian purposes; the press, designed to be the fount of knowledge, the exponent of truth and the guardian of virtue, too often used to gratify a vitiated taste, or disseminate a vile and godless literature. In view of such scenes the true patriot will mourn, and the Christian will take shelter in the pavilion of Divine sympathy and care. How to grapple with these evils, and if possible eradicate them, is a great and grave question, well deserving the attention of every Christian thinker and philanthropist.

THE BLESSED WATCHER.

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked."—Rev. 16: 15.

In the previous context, we find the girded angels issuing forth from the Temple with their vessels or vials full of the wrath of God. They are completing their mission of vengeance. The great Day of Judgment—the time of the end—the consummation of all things—is gradually drawing nigh. In the immediately preceding verse, there is described a mustering of the forces of evil at the instigation of three unclean spirits. These are represented as "going forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." At this announcement of Satan's final gigantic effort for mastery—the last conflict of great principles—when a bold and defiant skepticism is rampant, and ungodliness is abounding—the faith of the Church may be ready to fail, and her courage to falter. But a Divine voice, alike of comfort and of warning, breaks in parenthetically. John, up to this point, has been the faithful recorder of the visions which were passing before him. Once more it is The Coming One whose utterances are interjected in the midst of the dreadful and dreaded figurations. It is the old keynote of the Book—the leading "Memory of Patmos"—which is again sounded. He of whom in the first chapter it was announced, "Behold, He cometh with clouds"—He who, in the closing chapter of all, announces himself, "Surely I come quickly"—makes the intermediate proclamation, "Behold,

Digitized by Google

I COME AS A THIEF: Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments."

We have in these words a *Monition* and a *Benediction*. Let us briefly ponder them in their order.

I. The MONITION—"Behold, I come as a thief." The second coming of Christ is to be sudden and unlooked-for. It was not so with his first coming. Independent altogether of Hebrew prophecy, that advent had its dim and shadowy premonitions in the Gentile world. It was amid the hush of general expectation—when "all men were musing"—when, in the words of the great poet,

> "Birds of calm sat brooding on the charmed wave"—

when the sword was sheathed, the temple of Janus was shut, and palm branches of peace strewed the pathway of the expected King—that the Child of Bethlehem was born.

> "No war nor battle's sound,
> Was heard the world around;
> The idle spear and shield were high up hung;
> The hooked chariot stood
> Unstained with hostile blood;
> The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;
> And kings sat still, with awful eye,
> As if they surely knew their Sov'ran Lord was by."

So also is it with the spiritual advent of the Redeemer to the souls of His people. That, too, unless in rare and exceptional cases, is a gradual "coming." "His going forth is *prepared* as the morning." His approach is not like the abrupt and sweeping water-flood, but rather like the silent dew as it distils imperceptibly on blade and flower. Different will it be, however, at His second advent. With the speed of the lightning flash—with the suddenness of the entrapping snare, or the assault and surprise of the midnight robber; when men are asleep,—when every bolt and fastening seem proof against the prowling invader,—then the cry shall be heard, "Behold, the Judge standeth before the door!"

Our Lord himself, in His own memorable discourse, gives a vivid picture of the state of the world at His final appearing. It shall be "as in the days of Noah." The antediluvians were pursuing their guilty revelries—listening with mocking incredulity to the strange parable of predicted wrath—seeing in the clear sky overhead no symptoms of coming disaster—when "the flood came and destroyed them all." Or it shall be "as in the days of Lot." The same tale of terror seemed contradicted by the smiling plains beneath and the bright firmament above; for "the sun," we read, "had risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar" In other words, when he reached his shelter, and the hour of doom had arrived, there was nothing seen but the play of sunbeams, "sowing the earth with orient pearl." No portent was visible; the dwellers in Sodom awoke up, heedless of fears, to a new day of godless riot; when suddenly the windows of heaven were opened, and bolts of living fire descended on the doomed capitals. So shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. "Behold, I come as a thief." The world will have rocked itself asleep on the subject of its Lord's appearing. That appearing will be among the obsolete dogmas of its creed; denounced and discarded as the currency of prating fanatics and enthusiasts. It is so in large measure already. Outer nature, in its unvarying and apparently stereotyped laws, gives no indication of any such arrest on its appointed sequences; day follows night; summer treads on the heels of winter; autumn repays with usury the sower's vernal toil. There is no wrinkle on earth's brow—no symptom of decrepitude. It may be rather augured from the progress of science—the gigantic strides of discovery—that she is, like the eagle, moulting her feathers for a renewal of her youth. Nothing is there in the canopy above, nor in the garnered treasures hidden beneath her surface, to countersign and ratify the incredible warning of the Seer of Patmos. The lovers of pleasure—those who desire to have no higher portion than this life—are only too ready to accept these dicta of a godless and skeptic philosophy—to pursue with undisturbed avidity the paths of sin and the race for riches. Secure against invasion, avarice heaps up its treasure, and shouts its defiant boast, "To-morrow shall be as to-day, and much more abundant."

Digitized by Google

"Nay," says Christ, as he awakes the dormant peal of the advent-bell, "credit not the world's lie; for it is just when that lie has won for itself a fatal acceptance—when mankind have sunk into this state of guilty, bold, defiant indifference—that my footfall shall be heard—'Behold, I come *as a thief*.'" Just when the scoffer is uttering his presumptuous challenge, "Where is the promise of His coming?"—when all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of the creation;—when the husbandman is pursuing his peaceful labors—when the groves are vocal with song, or the valleys shouting with summer joy;—when the marts of commerce are crowded, and the wheels of industry are revolving,—when the ring of hammers is heard in arsenal and workshop,—when white-winged commerce is tracking as aforetime the highway of the nations,—when the student is poring over his books, or the astronomer is registering the period of the next eclipse, or the politician is casting up the contingencies of peace and war,—when the oblivious world, little dreaming of change, is immersed in her own gigantic selfishness and ambition;—then, yes *then*, "Behold, I come as a thief." The figure here used by the Lord, and spoken by Him from a state of glory, is the very same He employed in His magnificent prophetic utterance on the Mount of Olives in the days of His humiliation. "Watch, therefore," was the solemn peroration, "for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the *thief* would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up." St. Paul uses the same significant simile—"Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a *thief* in the night; for when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh." And to the same effect, Peter remembers the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, "But the day of the Lord will come as a *thief* in the night" (2 Peter 3:10). It is at night—midnight—the robber's hour—when darkness has drawn its sable curtains around a silent world—that the cry shall be heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh! Go ye out to meet him."

II. We have spoken of the *Monition:* let us now glance at the appended Benediction—"Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked." The reference here may be the simple and ordinary one, of a man, heedless of all danger, lying down to sleep with his garments cast carelessly aside;—the thief suddenly enters his chamber, takes forcible possession of his clothing, and leaves him naked and defenceless. Or, more probably, according to the great commentator, Lightfoot,* the allusion may be to a Jewish custom in the service of the Temple of Jerusalem. Twenty-four wards or companies were appointed night by night to guard the various entrances to the sacred courts. One individual was appointed as captain or marshal over the others, called the "Man of the Mountain of the House of God." His duty was to go round the various gates during the night to see that his subordinates were faithful at their posts. Preceded himself by men bearing torches, it was expected that each wakeful sentinel should hail his appearance with the password, "Thou Man of the Mountain of the House, peace be unto thee!" If, through unwatchfulness and slumber, this were neglected, the offender was beaten with the staff of office—his garments were burnt—he was branded with shame for failure of duty, by being left in a state of nakedness. It was in contrast with these slumbering Levites, that Jesus may be supposed to pronounce a blessing on His true people, who watch and keep their garments, and are saved from the reproach of spiritual nakedness. Their attitude is that of wakeful sentinels, who, anticipating their Lord's coming, are ever standing on their watch-tower, pacing their rounds, having on the whole armor of God—"the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left;" so that, "being clothed, they may not be found naked." And yet, be it ever remembered, that, knowing the possibility even of his own faithful disciples being involved in this state of drowsy unwakefulness, it is to them he addresses, as the great Captain and Overseer of His spiritual Temple,

* Vol. i, p. 919.

Digitized by Google

the solemn words, "Watch ye, therefore; for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh: at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning, lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping" (Mark 13:35).

Are we in the expectant attitude of those who are described as they that "love His appearing?"—who are waiting for "the promise of His coming?"—who are "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God?" That second coming of Christ *ought* with all of us to be regarded by its apostolic name as "The Blessed Hope"—the polar star in the sky of the future. It is true, indeed, that in one sense, to the believer, death is equivalent to the coming of his Lord, as being the hour which will usher him into His immediate presence. But death is never spoken of in Scripture as a blessed hope. Even the Christian holds his breath as the King of Terrors passes by. He may be ready to slip the cable whenever his Lord gives the word,—he may be ready to enter the dark valley, and, under the guidance and grace of the Shepherd-Leader, he may fear no evil;—but it is a dark valley notwithstanding: the tear, and the cypress, and the sable mourning, have ever formed the associations and accompaniments of the final hour and scene. Not so is it, however, with Christ's Advent. It is a jubilant anticipation. The believer can long for it—can pray for it—"Even so, COME, Lord Jesus;" "Make no tarrying, O my God;" "Make haste, my Beloved: be thou like to a roe or to a young hart on the mountains of spices." Old Francis Quarles, three centuries ago, thus loved to sing in quaint but tuneful melody—

"Will't ne'er be morning? will that promised light
Ne'er break, and clear those clouds of night?
Sweet Phosphor, bring the day
Whose conquering ray
May chase these fogs: sweet Phosphor, bring the day!

"Let those whose eyes, like owls, abhor the light;
Let those have night that love the night;
Sweet Phosphor, bring the day!
How sad delay
Afflicts dull hopes! sweet Phosphor, bring the day!

"Here's all the suns that glister in the sphere
Of earth: ah me! what comforts here?
Sweet Phosphor, bring the day!
Haste, haste away,
Heaven's loitering lamp! sweet Phosphor, bring the day."

Or how often does Samuel Rutherford break forth into some such impassioned words as these: "All is night that is here: therefore sigh and long for the dawning of that morning. Persuade yourself that the King is coming. Wait with the wearied night-watch for the breaking of the eastern sky."

Nor let us for a moment suppose that this watching is some fantastic, transcendental frame of mind which divorces the Christian from daily work and duty. These vigils may be best kept, not in cloistered seclusion. He watches most nobly and truly, who does so, not by abstracting himself from life's rough drudgery and needful calls, but who, in the midst of the ordinary avocations of the world—amid the fever and turmoil of busy existence—can catch up the jubilant chimes wafted to the ear of faith from the bells of glory. To many such, the familiar words of the poet may be invested with a new significancy as applied to the second coming:

"There are in this loud, stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of th' everlasting chime."

Let these inspired utterances be ever ringing their varying magnificent melodies in our ears: "Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." "I will come again, and receive you unto myself." "A little while, and ye shall not see Me; and again a little while, and ye shall see Me." "The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments!" Be it ours to keep this sentinel guard over the garments of a holy character and spotless life; jealous of the invasion of sin; realizing from day to day and from hour to hour the solemn thought, "In this dress—in these garments, I must one day appear before my great Lord;" dreading the possibility, through unwatchful-

Digitized by Google

ness, of being deprived of any part of them, and thus of being "*ashamed* before Him at His coming." If we expected a long-absent brother or friend from a distant land, how careful should we be in our preparations to give him welcome! How house and hall would be lustrated and adorned! How would ingenuity be taxed to deck out his chamber with every tribute which fond affection could devise! How careful to efface every association or memory of sadness, and prevent the occurrence of one note of discord or disharmony that would mar the joy of that glad return! How should it be with us, in the prospect of welcoming the Brother of brothers, the Friend of friends? How should the home of every heart be "swept and garnished," decked in best holiday attire, to give to the long-absent Lord, love's most loyal welcome!

Every day is bringing that advent nearer—lessening the span of that arc of promise. The "little while, and ye shall not see Me," is widening; the "little while, and ye shall see Me," is diminishing. The Church is like the shipmen in the sea of Adria, who "deemed that they drew near to some country." The historian of Columbus speaks thus of the great discoverer's approach to the shores of the unknown New World: "The admiral gave orders that the sails should be close reefed and the lead kept going, and that they should sail slowly, being afraid of shoals and breakers; feeling certain that the first gleam of daybreak would discover land under their bows." Is this true, in a nobler sense, of the "Better country?" Are we thus on the outlook to "see the King in His beauty, and the land that is very far off?" Others may be voyaging on in guilty unpreparedness, having nothing but the prospect of being stranded in a night of darkness and despair. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." Let the blessed hope impart new animation and intensity to your every Christian grace, strengthening your faith, calming your fears, quickening your zeal, disarming affliction of its sting, and death itself of its brief triumph. Let each Sabbath, each providential dispensation, add new power to the summons—"Awake, awake! put on thy beautiful garments!"—"Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel!" So that when that glorious second advent shall be consummated—when the Lord shall come and all His saints with Him—we may be able rejoicingly to exclaim, "Lo! this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." "*Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when* He COMETH, *shall find watching.*"

LOOK AT THE BRIGHT SIDE.

WE desire now to say a few cheering words to true Christians, who alone have a bright side, and who ought continually to look at it.

I. *Look on the bright side as regards your spiritual position and prospects.* If we who believe, could always realize what we are in Christ, even "light in the Lord," and whither we are going, even to "the inheritance of the saints in light," all would be well. Grace is very bright, and glory will be excessively bright. Nothing can affect the believer's oneness with Christ, or alienate from him that inheritance to the lively hope of which he has been begotten. It is the privilege of every believer to say, as he looks at his new relationship, its source and end, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:1, 2.) How many tried children of God, while doing this, have found sickness, poverty, pain, the prison gloom, and the martyr's cell, to be the very gate of heaven!

But some Christians who never expected again to doubt and fear, and whose confidence and joy others have almost envied,

> "Have found their latter stages worst,
> And travelled much by night."

In some instances, there have been physical causes for this depression, beyond all human

Digitized by Google

help, and we wonder much why God has permitted it. Take, for illustration, the case of the poet Cowper. In others, the sins of their regenerate state, their failures in duty, the want of glowing devotion, and of supreme love to God, have so weighed upon their mind, as to produce gloom and sad questionings. To such, we would especially say, look at the bright side as regards what you are in Christ now, and remember that this insures your being with Christ forever. Remember that when you trusted in Jesus, and by faith identified yourself with Him, that God ratified the act; or rather, that what you were helped to feel, do, and say, was a faint echo of what God had already done. In Christ your judicial standing ever remains the same.

> "You must not trust the sweetest frame,
> But wholly rest on Jesus' name."

And that name must still be your solid rock, when you most deeply feel your own vileness and weakness. The only enduring brightness is what Christ has done, and done for you; and remember that God looks on you, and will bless you according to His own appreciation of the value of the work, and the glory of the person, of His well-beloved Son. It was to very imperfect saints that Paul made the cheering announcement, "Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that you may be blameless (uncharged) in the day of Jesus Christ;" and why should not you take the full comfort of what Christ has done, and what you are in Him? If you had been a thousand times more devotional, loving, and zealous than you have been, if your spiritual course had been without a single break or flaw as regards continuousness of joy and peace; yet your only resting-place, your single hope for eternity, your one fountain of peace and joy, must still be the work of Jesus *for* you.

II. *Look at the bright side as regards God's providential dealings.* It is not easy always to do this; many eminent Bible saints have failed for a time, but they have succeeded at last; and after sore trial, they have come forth as gold. To some all has seemed so dark and cheerless, that they could not see where any light was to come from. They looked at circumstances and probabilities, instead of looking to God and His Word. Listen to some of their complaints, perhaps yours also. "Thou hast brought me into darkness;" "My strength and my hope are perished from the Lord." "It is better for me to die than live," moans peevish Jonah; while the great champion Elijah groans out, "Now, Lord, take away my life." David, Asaph, and others, passed through similar exercises, but all of them proved at last, that "light *was* sown for the righteous." In due time, it sprung forth like the dayspring, and then bitter moanings were succeeded by the sweetest songs. Behind the cloud that enshrouded them, there was hidden a bright light; God brought them forth into it; and we hear them singing, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul." "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" "God is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"

Tried saint, treading the "valley of the deadly shade," hemmed in by apparently impassable difficulties, "hope thou in God, who is light, and in whom there is no darkness at all." If you cannot lay hold on a precious promise, trust a divine perfection. If you can find no precedent to encourage you, remember that God has not exhausted all His resources on the deliverances of any or all of His people, who have gone before. If it be still very "dark, and Jesus is not come to you," be you sure that He will come at the right moment, if you will only expect Him.

But is there really no bright side to your present circumstances? Have you no mercies left? While casting your care, and making supplications, is there no scope for thanksgiving? (Phil. 4 : 6, 7.) Search and see. Compare your case with others; your condition with that of many of God's chief favorites; and especially your circumstances with what you acknowledge to be your deserts; and sure some streaks of brightness will appear; and they will grow larger as you give thanks, and cherish hope in God. "Dark providences (says one) are often but the screen to hide some royal piece of eternal beauty, which God intends to exhibit to our admiring eyes. The screen may

Digitized by Google

look black and impenetrable, but the unveiling is as the chariot of the cherubim. What is darkness now, will one day be as clear as sunshine. Only let the all-wise One use us for toil or suffering, for a keen gilded instrument, or for a plank in the mud, for the Master's feet to cross some ditch on; trust Him, though unseen; still love Him, and still believe that all is bright around the throne, and that God knows what He is about, far better than we do; and wait His unfolding will." Impatience and hasty conclusions can do no good, and may do much evil—may hinder, but cannot help. The following is a true testimony:

"Man doubles all the evils of his life by pondering over them. A scratch becomes a wound, a slight becomes an injury, a jest an insult, a small peril a great danger, and a slight sickness often ends in death. We should always look on the bright side of life's picture." This is doubtless all true; but the really "bright side of life's picture" is the Christward side always. How many have never learned this!

III. *Look at the bright side of the state of religion around us.*

There is a *dark* side; no one can deny this. Not to go beyond our own country, among the hundreds of millions of heathens, Mahommedans, and apostate Churches, the infidelity, superstition, worldliness, sensuality, pride, and dishonesty, mixed up more or less with our Christianity, is very saddening. It seems impossible to lay on the colors too dark while describing these things. Let us carry this sad case to the Lord in prayer, "sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land." But *all* is not dark; there is a bright side to religion even in our times, and, in many respects, it is larger and clearer than in the former days. There are a good many upright, spiritual, loving, zealous Christians to be found in various denominations; there can be no doubt of that. There are many earnest, diligent, wise laborers, whom God encourages and owns. "There is fruit that will remain;" the reapers of this age and the sowers of the past will, we believe, rejoice together. If we get out of communion with God, get suspicious of others, or get disheartened in our work, we are sure to think things are worse than they really are. It was when Elijah was disheartened and fled from his work that he sighed out, "I only am left." If we trace the man of God to the mount of communion, and view him when the still, small voice has hushed his troubled spirit, we shall hear God himself tell him of "seven thousand" yet reserved by Himself, and see the cast-down prophet rejoice in the blessed fact. Let us, while eschewing doubtful things, and denouncing all wrong things, take care to keep our sympathies alive with all that is good, useful, and beautiful. This will preserve us from becoming "complainers," as we grow older. There are various things which other Christians do, and which they seem to do good by, that neither our consciences, tastes, nor abilities would perhaps warrant our uniting with; but we need not oppose or rail at them. We are not responsible for what is done; we could not hinder it if we would, and perhaps would not if we could. If such laborers do any real good to the bodies, minds, or souls of men; if they break up ground which our ploughshares would not penetrate, and so are pioneers for others who are more refined, let us not find fault. If Christ is preached, we should say with the apostle, "I therein do rejoice,—yea, and will rejoice."

IV. *Look at the bright side of the destiny of man and the earth.*

There is a large scope for hope; the sure word of prophecy is "a light that shineth in a dark place." The pages of inspiration are flooded with glory as regards the future of man and his world. The great result of all this is summed up in the following wondrous declarations: "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea." "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." "The nations of the saved shall walk in the light of the new Jerusalem." "There shall be no more curse, sorrow, or crying." "Behold I make all things new." "The creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Let us then, according to these promises, look for the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Digitized by Google

The habit of our souls should be "Looking for that blessed hope." We do well to remember that hope and holiness are intimately connected; and, consequently, hope and happiness. We know that before the morning cometh, there will be a very dark night; war must precede peace, and a fearful apostasy prevail before the universal triumph of truth is realized. May God prepare us for these fast-coming times of trouble, and prevent us from sanctioning anything which tends to bring on "the perilous times of the last days." But we must and will look beyond all this, beyond the woe-trumpets, and the vials, and the earthquake shock, to the time when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.

There are three things which sometimes dismay—looking within on our own hearts, round upon our enemies, and forward to what is coming upon the world. Look in, and if your sin and guilt dismay, look back to the Cross. Look round, and when oppressed by the sight, look up to the enthroned Mediator. Look forward to the coming storm, and then beyond it. Beyond the troublous ocean of time is the continent of Eternal glory, all bright with God's own light. Beyond the region of sorrow, trial, and conflict, rise the turrets of the New Jerusalem, where there shall be no more sorrow, tears, or death.

V. *Look at the bright side of sorrowful service.* There is joy in God's work, and happiness in seeking to glorify Him; but still real service is often sorrowful service—all true sowers sow in tears. It was thus with all the prophets, so also with the Great Master and His apostles; and it must be so to the end. It is true that we are now living in smooth times, and some of God's servants seem to ride on the top of the tide, with a favoring wind filling their sails. They do much work, are well paid for it, have great applause, and much success. We doubt not that they have something out of sight to counterbalance, some bitterness which the heart only knoweth.

There are many who have to prosecute their work amidst much discouragement, with very few to cheer them, and some ready to blame them for not succeeding better, according to *their* estimate of success. How many have had and still have to contend with poverty, trials, and disappointments, who—

> "See every day new straits attend,
> And wonder where the scene will end!"

Some have to minister in lonely, out-of-sight spheres, and in very "few things." It may be at the close of life some true laborers have concluded that, after all, they have done but little good. The enemy also torments them about this. Their life-work sometimes appears like a range of bleak-looking hills, bearing little fruit. In such moments as these, the fertile valleys and the fruitful dells among these hills, where many a plant is growing and bearing fruit from the seed which they scattered, *are not then seen.* Such may forget what God has done by them, but He whom they have served in feebleness will not forget. They shall see the fruit of their service in heaven, and possibly may be surprised at what God hath wrought by them.

Think, discouraged laborer, of the despised and disappointed Master. He mourned over Israel not gathered, and Jerusalem impenitent; but remember that He never desponded; neither must we. Let us seek grace to stand ready in spirit for any service, however humble, and say, with David's servants, "We are ready to do whatsoever our Lord the King shall appoint." Remember that the Lord is looking on, and regards *quality* more than *quantity*, and is especially jealous that we do the will of our Father and not our own.

The Lord Jesus looked at the bright side all through life, and even in His darkest hour. "He set the Lord always before Him," and on the cross God set THE JOY before Him. The apostles "looked at the things not seen," set their minds on things above, and thus were enabled to say, "Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." If "in heaviness, through many temptations," they still greatly rejoiced in the hope of the inheritance (1 Pet. 1:6). They not only rejoiced in hope of the glory of God, but they gloried in tribulation also, because they saw a bright side in what God's wondrous working educed from dark dispensations (Rom. 5:3–5). In thus

Digitized by Google

acting they recommended religion, and exhibited its power and beauty. They knew that nothing but godliness had a bright side; they were sure that godliness had, because it has the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come.

In closing, one word to those who, like the writer, are getting near the end of life, with much to mourn over, more to be thankful for, and glory to hope for. "Experience worketh hope," and hope should soar and sing. Thus others will be encouraged, and God will be glorified. We have had our disappointments; it is well if they have not soured us. We have had our enjoyments; let us now help others to be happy. We have got our own special promises; let us look upward and expect God to make them good when flesh and heart shall fail. Let us take as cheerful a view of things as truth will allow and experience warrant; and be not backward to testify to others of the grace that has helped us hitherto.

At a large family meeting of old and young, the question was asked, Which season of life is most happy? After being freely discussed by the guests, it was referred for answer to the host, upon whom was the burden of fourscore years. He asked if they had not noticed a group of trees before the dwelling; and said, "When the spring comes, and in the soft air the buds are breaking on the trees, and they are covered with blossoms, I think how beautiful is spring! And when summer comes and covers the trees with its heavy foliage, and singing birds are all among the branches, I think how beautiful is summer! And when autumn loads them with golden fruit, and their leaves bear the gorgeous tint of frost, I think how beautiful is autumn! And when it is severe winter, and there is neither foliage nor fruit, then I look up, and through the leafless branches, as I never could until now, I see the stars shine through."

Well said, this is "fruit in old age!" Happy are they whom God leads out under the blue heavens of His favor, and bids them behold the stars of promise, and speaks to them of the coming of Him in whom they are all yea and amen! Happy those who, when the world recedes, when the grass withereth and the flower fadeth, can rejoice in the great fact, "the Word of the Lord endureth forever!"

WATCH OR WAIL.

That the great tribulation spoken of in Rev. 7, and so often alluded to throughout that book, is yet future, is admitted, I believe, by all. But whether the Church will pass through that fiery ordeal, or escape it altogether, is an important question; and I believe the true answer to it to be this: a *portion* of the Church will escape it, though comparatively a small number; while by far the larger portion, the "innumerable multitude," will pass through it, in the case of many, we apprehend, on account of their unbelief and unwatchfulness for the coming of their Lord.

I cannot but think that it is through not distinguishing between Christ's first appearance in our heavens, to receive His waiting people to himself, when He comes suddenly, unexpectedly, "as a thief in the night," and His coming openly, manifestly, in the clouds of heaven, when "every eye shall see Him," that so much confusion and apparent contradiction of Scripture exist in the minds of many, upon these important subjects. He believes, what is of more consequence still, that, from the same cause, many are putting events, such as the restoration of the Jews, &c., between the present time and Christ's coming; and so unconsciously, have a prejudice existing in their hearts, which throws them off their guard, and produces, along with other things, that spirit of slumber and unwatchfulness, which, alas, now so greatly prevails. But "distinguish the periods, and the Scriptures will harmonize." Distinguish between Christ's coming, to take away His waiting people, and His subsequent descent to the earth, accompanied by all His saints, to the final catastrophe, as described in Rev. 18, and all is comparatively easy and intelligible. Between the present moment and that action of Christ's coming, which, from its suddenness, is compared to that of "a thief in the night," we know not of a single event which must necessarily intervene!

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

LECTURES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

THE course of Lectures on the Revelation of Jesus Christ, now for a considerable time in course of preparation, delivery, and publication, by Dr. Seiss, has not progressed as rapidly as was hoped; but it is going on. The first number of the second volume (No. 5). has now been printed for several months, and can be procured by those who wish to furnish themselves or friends with copies. The twenty-first Lecture, which is upon the tenth chapter of this interesting and important book of Holy Scripture, was delivered on the evening of September 10th. It is designed by the author, if God will, to furnish the succeeding Lectures of the course with more frequency. But, as it will be some time yet before another number is printed, we give in advance, the substance of what was said on the Little Book in the hand of the Angel, described in Revelations 10, in the article next following. It will doubtless be read with interest.

THE LITTLE BOOK.

As this Angel, whom we take to be none other than the adorable Saviour himself, proceeded with the act of setting his right foot upon the sea and his left upon the land, thereby asserting his claim and purpose to take possession of them and to establish his own rule over them, the Apostle saw "*in his hand a little book*, or *roll*." This is a marked feature, and not without important significance. It is not the main thing in the vision, as Alford and some others have erroneously supposed; but it is an expressive accessory to the thrilling revelation.

The Apocalypse abounds with references to books and records of a remarkable character. The first verse of the fifth chapter disclosed to our view a very notable document, in connection with which all the interest, up to the chapter now before us, has arisen. We had a good deal to observe concerning that book, or roll, at the time. We were then constrained to look upon it as representing the title-deeds of the inheritance, forfeited by man, and recovered by the Lamb.* We saw it lifted by that Lion-Lamb, amid the adoring shouts of eternity, and one of its seals after another broken open, followed with miraculous commotions, which shook the earth from centre to circumference, and affected even the great orbs of immensity. When the last of the seals was broken, that book was still in the hands of Him who alone, in all the universe, was found worthy to take it, break its seals, or even to look upon it. The breaking of that seal introduced the seven trumpet-angels; and then, for the time, we lost sight of the wonderful document around which all this interest and these wonders concentre. And as this mighty Angel can be none other than the selfsame Lion-Lamb who took the book from the hand of eternal majesty, why may not this roll in his hand be the same identical roll lifted from the throne? Some commentators have ridiculed the thought, but we take it to be a most reasonable supposition. If the book in the hand of this Angel be not the same book which the Lamb took from the throne in heaven, then that marvellous document, after all the wonderful interest and events created by it, most strangely and ingloriously disappears, and is never heard of any more forever. Such awe and exultation at its first appearance, and such mighty occurrences attending the mere opening of its seals, beget the expectation and belief, and indeed require, that we should hear of it again; that it should not be so miserably hustled off the scene; and that it should have an end befitting its character and its introduction into these visions. But an unaccountably sorry fate does it receive, if we are not to recognize it in the roll in the hand of this Angel.

It is said of the little book now before us, that it was "*opened*." This implies that it had been shut, sealed; and that what kept it shut, its seals, had been broken off; all of

* See vol. i, pp. 264–279, *et seq.*

Digitized by Google

which accords precisely with what we saw of the book taken by the Lamb.

Both documents were *small rolls.* They are both designated by the word βιβλιον, which is the diminutive of βιβλος. The one in the hand of the Angel is, also, by some manuscripts, called βιβλαριδιον; but that is only another diminutive form of the same word, whilst all the best manuscripts, in one place or another, use precisely the same form of the word for the one which is used for the other.*

The nature of the case would also seem to call for the presence here of the same document, which the Lamb had taken from the throne. The Angel is engaged in the solemn and sublime act of formally claiming the possession of the earth. He needs his warrant for such an act. Redemption proceeds on a legal foundation. Christ as our Redeemer had to be made under the law. It was necessary that He should fulfil all righteousness. All His successes, triumphs, and exaltations were achieved on the basis of having meritoriously met and answered all demands of the law. He could neither rise from the dead, ascend to the right hand of the Father, propose free forgiveness to men, or dare to repossess man of the forfeited inheritance, except as he had satisfactorily atoned for all man's sins, and in himself meritoriously won and purchased all that he now or ever holds or claims for His redeemed. It was only as He was slain for mankind, and atoned for their unrighteousness, and thus overcame, that He was pronounced worthy to take the book, or open its seals,' or act the *Goel* for those whose inheritance had been disponed away, and overrun by aliens. And so neither could He claim and take possession of the earth, and clear it of all foes and usurpers, except upon warrant from the law giving that right as the just due of His perfect righteousness. No man can claim land without showing that he holds his title-deed for it. No one can proceed to execute penalties even upon transgressors, without warrant from the government. And so our mighty *Goel*, in proceeding to set his right foot on the sea, and his left on the land, claiming possession of the earth, and about to inflict extirpating punishments upon the rebels who infest it, holds in his hand the open title to it, worthily obtained from the right hand of eternal majesty, displays it to all observers as his warrant from the throne, and challenges the potencies of earth and hell to yield or perish; whilst all the thunders of almighty power utter themselves for his support.

The ultimate disposal made of this document is also such as to correspond with the character I have assigned to it, and to identify it as the same that was taken by the Lamb from the hand of sovereign Majesty. John says, "*The voice which I heard out of the heaven* [*I heard*] *again speaking with me, and saying, Go, take the book* [*or roll*] *which is opened in the hand of the Angel, who standeth upon the sea and upon the land. And I went to the Angel, saying to him, Give me the little book And he saith to me, Take, and eat it. And I took the little book* [*or roll*] *out of the hand of the Angel, and ate it.*" Thus the history of this βιβλιον terminated. And for what does our blessed Re-

* This little book is mentioned four times, and in the different manuscripts and critical editions of the Apocalypse, is called βιβλιον, βιβλαριδιον, βιβλιδαριδιον; all of which words are diminutives of βιβλος —different forms of the same word, about equal in signification.

In verse 2, the Codex Vaticanus, Cod. Coislinianus; two Codices of Stephens, Baroc. Cod. N. T., Sinaitic 5, Huntington 1, Pet. 2, and Matthæi, read βιβλιον, the same as in the case of the roll taken by the Lamb.

In verse 8, the Codex Alexandrinus, Cod. Basilianus, Cod. Ephraem, Cod. Coisln., Cod. Licestrensis, Aldine N. T., the Vulgate, Lachman, Tischendorf, Thiele, Bengel, Alford, and Tregelles, read βιβλιον.

In verse 9, the Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Basil., Cod. Coisln., Cod. Alexandrinus as corrected by original scribe, original Cod. Ephraem, the Vulgate, Bengel, Tyndale, read βιβλιον.

In verse 10, the Codex Vaticanus, Cod. Sinaiticus, Cod. Coisln., Baroc. Cod. N. T., Huntington 1, Card. Barbarini, Matthæi, the Vulgate, Tyndale, Bengel, &c., read βιβλιον.

And in each of these instances, where one manuscript varies from another, or from itself, the word is either βιβλαριδιον, or βιβλιδαριδιον, neither of which can be said really to differ in sense from βιβλιον.

Digitized by Google

deemer take the book out of the right hand of eternal sovereignty? Why does He appear in the court of heaven as a once slain Lamb that he may be accounted worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof? What indeed is the great object and intent of all His works and doings, whether on earth or in heaven, to procure rights, titles, and warrants from the throne? Yea, what? but that He may give and impart the same to His apostles and believing people, that they may take them, eat them, appropriate them, preach and prophesy them, live on them, and build themselves up with them unto eternal life? There is no book like the roll which the Lamb takes from the right hand of the sitter on the throne. It embodies in itself all the prophetic, priestly, and royal rights of Christ in the attitude of our *Goel* or Redeemer. It compasses the very spring and kernel of all sacred prophecy, all evangelic preaching, all true faith, all abiding hope. It is the eternal charter, from the right hand of eternal sovereignty, on which reposes the whole right, authority, work, kingdom, and dominion of Jesus as the Lord and Saviour of men. And the grand intent and purpose of all that He has done in reference to that document, for which He has obtained it, and freed it of its seals, and for which He holds it open in His hand, as He proceeds to take possession of the earth, is that His people may have the benefit of it; that they may take it from His hand, feed on it, incorporate it with their inmost being, make it the subject of their hopes, their prophecies, and prayers, and in the strength and virtue of it live and reign with Him forever. And if we have at all hit upon the nature of the document which John beheld upon the right hand of Him that sitteth upon the throne, the analogy of faith, and the whole congruity of things come into play to establish and confirm the belief that this *βιβλιον* or *βιβλαριδιον*, in the hand of the Angel, is the same book, and that the Angel who holds it is none other than the Lion from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, the Lamb that was slain, the blessed Jesus.

The effect of this roll on the prophet likewise corresponds with the view we have taken of it. There is nothing sweeter than the Gospel to a willing and believing soul. The good things which Jesus has obtained for us from the Father, and especially the title to them, are so suitable to us, that every child of God can exclaim with the Psalmist: "How sweet are thy words to my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to the mouth!" The victory of the Lamb over sin and death—the meritorious repurchase of our alienated inheritance—the acknowledged right, and power, and gracious promise of our Lord, to tread down Satan under our feet, and bring us into the goodly land of rest—all these are involved with the roll from the Saviour's hand, and are like living waters to the thirsty, and precious manna to the hungry. But,

E'en the rapture of pardon is mingled with fears,
And the cup of thanksgiving with penitent tears.

No one can truly eat the book, but he "must prophesy." Its power in us is to send on errands, lead through scenes, and charge with offices and duties, full of hardships, trials, and many a bitterness. The roll of God's word to Israel was in the mouth of Ezekiel "as honey for sweetness," but it carried him on a mission to which he "went in bitterness, in the heat of his spirit." It costs pains to be a full-souled believer, a faithful prophet, an unflinching candidate for an inheritance not seen as yet. And such dreadful "lamentation, and mourning, and woe," must come upon the unsanctified world before the precious charter Christ has obtained from the throne can go into full effect, that no true man can be other than sad when he contemplates it. So the book in John's mouth was "sweet as honey;" but when he had eaten it his "belly was made bitter." To receive as his own, and as the food of his soul, these precious title-deeds of the blessed inheritance, thrilled him with joy and gladness; but those scenes of blood and wrath to the dwellers upon the earth which must be enacted before the inheritance is reached—those hardships to the flesh in holding faithfully to the holy document—those conflicts, and contradictions of sinners, and harrowing contumelies, and trying dangers, and laborious toils, attendant upon honest prophesying of these things—all com-

Digitized by Google

bined to make the effects of the book bitter in his body, though so sweet to his taste. It is all perfectly natural, and easily accounted for, just as we have taken it. Even Jesus wept on the very eve of triumph, and while the Hosannas of final glory were already heralding their approach.

A NEEDLESS FEAR.

A CORRESPONDENT writes us, that he has heard it urged as an objection to the doctrine of the perpetuity of the race, that "if the generations of the human race are to be perpetual, there will come a time when the earth cannot contain the people; and that if they should even be removed by successive translations, yet a time would come, in the distant future, when the ever-increasing number will fill all known worlds, and even space itself." The writer wonders how this objection is to be met.

We reply, that we are not much concerned about rationalistic difficulties when we are once sure that God hath spoken. We take it for granted that Omniscient Deity is quite as far-thinking as poor, finite man; that He knows how to carry through whatever he Has revealed as belonging to His plans and purposes; and that if it is His will to perpetuate the human race in successive generations forever, He is quite prepared to meet any emergency that may arise in the case. We never trouble lest the Almighty should be at a loss to meet the necessities which He himself, knowing the end from the beginning, creates. We have no fears that men will ever become too numerous for God, not one of whom can ever be at all without His consent. For people to hesitate at articles of faith on such grounds is ridiculous and silly in the extreme. They know not what they are about.

But even on the low plane of thought in which this "objection" is conceived, there is no reason in it. Space is just as illimitable as eternity. As man cannot find an end for the one, so neither can he discern boundaries to the other. It may be supposed that creation has limits; but, for all that man knows, or can find out on the subject, it may be just as infinite as the Creator himself. The objection speaks of "*known* worlds;" but who can tell that all the multiplicity of "*known* worlds" are any thing more than a mere infinitesimal fraction of the universe, just as six thousand years are but an infinitesimal fraction of eternity? It is only an evidence of man's littleness and nothingness that he should find difficulty with Divine revelations on such grounds.

Besides, the same difficulty would hold against the natural course of things, if man had never sinned. Adam and Eve had received the command to "increase and multiply," before the fall. Suppose, then, that they had maintained their innocence under the test and temptation of the garden, and the race had gone on undisturbed, holy and pure, as seems to have been not only possible, but the original intention, what would there ever have been to interrupt the succession of endless generations? What, in that case, would have become of all the people? Are we to conclude that the Creator miscalculated what He was doing, and that all would needs have come to irremediable grief, because He had not made the world or the universe big enough to hold all? And if He made no mistake in the original constitution, so as to risk falling upon such a difficulty "in the distant future," so neither are we to be alarmed that the mediatorial plan is not arranged with equal foresight and wisdom, even if there should be an everlasting succession of generations.

Let us learn faith in God's word, whatever that word may teach, and be sure that God knows what He is about a good deal better than we can discern. If the race as such, in the on-going of generations (as the intimations of the Scriptures seem to be, and as the case requires, if redemption is not to fall short of the success and ruin of sin), is to be redeemed, we may count on "eternal generations," the same as if sin had never touched it; and we may, at the same time, confidently conclude, that God has arranged to take proper care of it, and knows what to do with "the ever-increasing numbers," and will be at no loss to fulfil His covenant to every one of them.

Digitized by Google

There is nothing said in the Scriptures about "successive translations," on the other side of the great day, as nothing of the kind is said about what would have been the fact, had man never sinned. Nor is it at all necessary that we should know anything about what will happen with those distant generations, for the reason that we will not be among them, and will have our lot decided long before any such a crisis can arrive as that with which this silly "objection" is concerned. Let us see to it, that we are waiting and ready for the translation which the Scriptures tell us *is now impending;* and when generations in the distant future are to be disposed of, they will know what they are to expect.

TOO HARD FOR THEM.

It appears that some of the devotees of the modern rationalistic, humanitarian theory of the gradual introduction of the glorious millennium by the progress of science, liberty, reforms, and evangelism, are becoming alarmed at the revulsion that is being wrought by a more candid and textual examination of the Scriptures with reference to the future of this world. Dr. Edward Beecher gives the note of warning and fear on this subject in the *Independent* of August 24.

"There are those," he says, "who anticipate a renovation of all things by the preaching of the Gospel, attended by the power of the Holy Spirit, pervading every department of society; government, commerce, education, the arts and sciences, social life, are to be thoroughly pervaded by the spirit of Christ, and He is to reign over a reorganized world,"—this reorganization to be wrought by means of the preaching of the Gospel by the Church, and its human auxiliaries.

"But there are not a few," he adds, "*and their number is increasing*, who look for no such intellectual and moral victory. They look for a visible and personal revelation of Christ, to defeat His enemies, to raise and glorify the saints of past ages, and with them to judge the nations. After defeating and destroying the worldly organizations that have desolated the earth and debased and corrupted the nations, He will reorganize society under the rule of the risen saints, and with them reign at the head of a universal empire. In the details of this empire they differ. But in one thing they agree: that it will be a theocracy, administered by permanent rulers, not chosen by the election of the nations, but ordained for the great work by God. They do not agree in the physical changes to be wrought in this world at the coming of Christ; but they all concede that they will be vast and stupendous, fitting the world for its final and highest destiny.

"Those who anticipate this future entertain no hope of the universal conversion of men and the reorganization of society by the preaching of the Gospel and the spiritual power of the Holy Spirit. Such influences and all missionary enterprises will but take out the elect of God from an unbelieving world, before Christ shall come to redeem His saints and destroy His foes."

He further says that these people cannot see the evidences that the world is being converted to God, but "rather note the increase of scientific atheism, the power of that infidelity that professes to aim at a moral standard higher than that of the Bible, the extensive corruption of schemes of social reform in the Old World and the New, the increase and spread of every form of sensualism, the extensive and intensified corruption of governments, the fearful extent of bribery in legislatures, and the power of wealthy corporations and political rings to shape legislation at their pleasure, in spite of honesty and justice. And, as they gaze on such fearful forms of evil, they will have no faith in the possibility of intellectual and moral developments that shall paralyze the power of error and sin in every form, and triumphantly effect the regeneration of human society."

And yet, he says, "*their power seems to be increasing.* The more recent Commentaries are tending to undermine the views" of the class to which he belongs. "This is true of Alford, Ellicott, Lange and his co-laborers, especially Drs. Lillie, Auberlen, and Riggenbach. To these we must add the writings of English and American millenarians, the older and the more recent. And there is at present no ade-

Digitized by Google

quate counterpoise to the weight of the authority of the commentators whom we have mentioned.

"This state of things," he says, "is not salutary or safe. There is a gradual process of undermining going on in our young men and theological students, which will in time show its results."

He accordingly calls upon the men whom he takes for guardians of truth, and asks: "What are the professors of our theological seminaries intending to do on this matter? What our leading divines and pastors? Do they not see the current of which we have spoken? Have they nothing to say about it?"

He says, "The advocates of the personal reign of Christ raise the question, Can permanent governments be organized from such materials? Can there be a perfect state of society till there shall be incorruptible governments; and can this be till the risen saints reign? Is not society based on successive generations of men, who are wholly depraved at the outset and need regeneration, too unstable in its elements ever to form a social organization perfect, permanent, and free from decline? Nothing like it has been seen. New England has had declines, and does not even hold her own. Nor does any part of Christendom do better.

"Think of New York and her corruptions. How is this great commercial metropolis ever to be made thoroughly Christian? Think of the controlling forces at Washington and at the state capitals. Think of the bribery of legislators, and the purchase of judges, and the frauds in elections, astounding and undeniable. Look at the increasing tendencies to the various forms of sensualism and self-indulgence. Look at the extent to which the spirit of the world pervades and paralyzes the churches. Consider the assaults of error on the very foundations of society. If then, Christendom has not as yet been able to hold her own, how can the elements of society in idolatrous nations, debased by the evil influences of past ages, be so elevated as to furnish the materials of a true and stable social system? Is not a new dispensation needed? Are not higher and personal revelations of God indispensable? Are not perfect and permanent rulers, organized under Christ, the only hope of the world?"

But how to meet and answer these arguments he does not exactly know. He thinks the questions put may perhaps admit of a negative reply, but he is much at a loss on what to base such a negative. This much, however, he feels himself forced to admit and affirm, that "the views of the future renovation of the world by moral power, commonly entertained, *are not sufficiently profound and radical*;" that "the magnitude of the forces of evil to be encountered and overcome is not thoroughly estimated" by the popular theory, and that "the degree of intellectual and moral power, needed by the Church to solve the great problem" and accomplish the end, are not to be found in the prevailing calculations. He therefore concludes that to answer the questions of those who teach the personal coming and reign, there must needs be a "new departure," a penetration into truer and more thoroughly developed ideas of what is involved in the perfect renovation of human society, and of the forces by which it is to be produced, and a more profound study of prophecy than has heretofore obtained among post-millennialists.

We agree with Dr. Beecher in these conclusions, and have only to regret the new and painful necessity under which our doctrines and arguments are laying those who adhere to his waning theory. We would gladly save them this unpleasantness, if fidelity to the Scriptures and facts permitted it. But, with all the embarrassments that surround them, and the immense job that is on their hands of reconstructing and readjusting their unscriptural system, we are compelled to press the siege, and never to relax in the least till the delusive and damaging theories and fancies of man surrender to the plain and invincible testimonies of God, or the Lord himself ends the matter by His own presence.

HOW WE ARE PROGRESSING!

We sometimes see a large, double-sheet weekly paper, edited by a man who writes himself a D.D., which calls itself *The Family Visitor*, and claims to be conserving "the

Digitized by Google

happiness of the human race" "upon the best and truest principles of moral life and social virtue." The paper is one which must needs have a large body of supporters, whose thinking and feeling it reflects. And in looking over it to ascertain what it regards as "the best and truest principles of moral life and social virtue," we find it devoted exclusively to Free Masonry, Temperance Orders, and Young Men's Christian Associations. What interior brotherhood there may be between these societies, we leave to others to explain; but we take it as somewhat significant that this paper classes them together in the same category, advocates them all alike, and finds in them the embodied principles and chosen instruments for the achievement of "the happiness of the human race." One of its writers says: "There is so much profession and doctrine which do not result in any conceivable good to man, that we are led to doubt a system which enjoins a creed." He presents it as the true course to encourage organizations which ignore Church and Sacraments, and in which "the Jew, the Turk, and the Christian all meet as brothers, and fulfil the conditions which each religion requires, but fails to accomplish." Hence such directions as this:

"Is a brother off the track?
Try the square:
Try it round on every side:
Nothing draws a craftsman back
Like the square when well applied:
Try the square.

"Is he crooked—is he frail?
Try the square.
Try it early—try it late;
When all other efforts fail,
Try the square to make him straight:
Try the square.

"Does he still persist in wrong?
Try the square.
Loves he darkness more than light?
Try it thorough—try it long—
Try the square to make him right:
Try the square.

"*Fails* the square to bring him to?
Try the square.
Be not sparing of the pains,
While there's such a work to do,
While a crook or knot remains,
Try the square."

Hence also we read in this same sheet:

"We will *save* our sisters, brothers,
And our fathers, and our mothers,
With our neighbors and all others,
With our Temperance Pledge."

"Fling out the old flag to the sky!
Let it flash in the sun and the breeze,
While the temperance legions march by!
Down! down the whole host *on your knees!*"

In our learning of the Gospel, the people who accept such teachings, or give themselves to such professions, are very far "off the track," beyond the efficacy of "the square," or the "temperance pledge," or even the worshipful "flag," to save their hopes from perishing, or themselves from perdition.

THE *Northern Independent* tells the world how they drink wine and whiskey at Saratoga. It says that during the last fashionable season the Grand Union Hotel was open one hundred and twelve days. The daily wine-room receipts were $1000, and the bar receipts averaged $600 per day. So the amount spent for liquors at this one hotel in Saratoga, last summer, was $123,200 for wine, and $69,200 for other drinks, making a total of nearly two hundred thousand dollars for the 26,870 guests entertained during the heated term, at the mammoth rum-hell! This men call modern civilization!

AT the recent meeting, in this city, of the American Institute or convention of Homœopathic doctors, the President, Dr. Wilson, delivered the annual address, of which the *Press* says: "The large part of it was a condemnation of theology, inspiration, and the pulpit, and a plea for the substitution of the teachings of inductive science in their stead. Belief in inspiration was described as mental slavery, and the pulpit was declared to be the great obstacle to the investigation of truth." From a man who is willing to admit that his ancestors were monkeys, we would naturally expect nothing better. And if Dr. Adam Clarke's theory be right, the devil had an early preference for the use of instruments of this class for teaching how we may overcome the enslaving restraints of our Maker, get our eyes opened, and be as God, knowing good and evil.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. IX. DECEMBER, 1871. No. 12.

Special Contributions.

THE PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH.

A NEW AND CRITICAL TRANSLATION.

By Franz Delitzsch, D.D.

Part Third—The Judgment and Salvation of the Heathen.

Chapter XIII.

Sentence [oracle] concerning Babel, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

2. On woodless mountain lift ye up a banner, call to them with loud sounding voice, shake the hand, that they may enter into gates of princes!

3. I, I have summoned my sanctified ones, also my heroes to my wrath, my proudly rejoicing ones.

4. Hark, a rumbling on the mountains after the manner of a great people; hark, a rumbling of kingdoms of nations met together! Jehovah of hosts musters an army.

5. Those that have come out of a distant land, from the end of the heaven: Jehovah and His instruments of wrath, to destroy the whole earth [or world-empire].

6. Howl; for the day of Jehovah is near; like a destructive force from the Almighty it comes.

7. Therefore all arms hang loosely down, and every human heart melts away.

8. And they are troubled: they fall into cramps and pangs; like a woman in labor they writhe: one stares at the other; their faces are faces of flame.

9. Behold, the day of Jehovah cometh, a cruel one, and wrath and fierce anger, to turn the earth into a wilderness: and its sinners He destroys out of it.

10. For the stars of heaven, and its Orions, will not let their light shine: the sun darkens itself at its rising, and the moon does not let its light shine.

11. And I visit the evil upon the world, and upon sinners their guilt, and sink into silence the pomp of the proud; and the boasting of tyrants I throw to the ground.

12. I make men more precious than fine gold, and people than a jewel of Ophir.

13. Therefore I shake the heavens, and the earth trembles away from its place, because of the wrath of Jehovah of hosts, and because of the day of His fierce anger.

14. And it comes to pass as with a gazelle which is scared, and as with a flock without gatherers: they turn every one to his people, and they flee every one to his land.

15. Every one that is found is pierced through, and every one that is caught falls by the sword.

16. And their infants are dashed to pieces before their eyes, their houses plundered, and their wives ravished.

17. Behold, I rouse up the Medes over them, who do not regard silver, and take no pleasure in gold.

18. And bows dash down young men; and they have no compassion on the fruit of the womb: their eye has no pity on children.

19. And Babel, the ornament of kingdoms, the proud boast of the Chaldeans, becomes like Elohim's overthrowing judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah.

Digitized by Google

20. She remains uninhabited forever, and unoccupied into generation of generations; and not an Arab pitches his tent there, and shepherds do not make their folds there.

21. And there lie beasts of the desert, and horn-owls fill their houses; and ostriches dwell there, and field-devils hop about there.

22. And jackals howl in her castles, and wild dogs in palaces of pleasure; and her time is near to come, and her days will not be prolonged.

Chapter XIV.

For Jehovah will have mercy on Jacob, and will once more choose Israel, and will settle them in their own land: and the foreigner will associate with them, and they will cleave to the house of Jacob.

2. And nations take them, and accompany them to their place; and the house of Israel takes them to itself in the land of Jehovah for servants and maid-servants: and they hold in captivity those who led them away captive; and become lords over their oppressors.

3. And it cometh to pass, on the day that Jehovah giveth thee rest from thy plague, and from thy cares, and from the heavy bondage wherein thou wast made to serve,

4. That thou shalt raise such a song of triumph concerning the King of Babel, and say: How hath the oppressor ceased! the place of torture ceased!

5. Jehovah hath broken the rod of the wicked, the ruler's staff,

6. Which smote nations in wrath with strokes without ceasing, subjugated nations wrathfully with hunting that never stays.

7. The whole earth rests, is quiet: they break forth into singing.

8. Even the cypresses rejoice at thee, the cedars of Lebanon: Since thou hast gone to sleep, no one will come up to lay the axe upon us.

9. The kingdom of the dead below is all in uproar on account of thee, to meet thy coming; it stirreth up the shades for thee, all the he-goats of the earth; it raiseth up from their throne-seats all the Kings of the nations.

10. They all rise up and say to thee, Art thou also made weak like us? art thou become like us?

11. Thy pomp is cast down to the region of the dead, the noise of thy harps: maggots are spread under thee, and they that cover thee are worms.

12. How art thou fallen from the sky, thou star of light, sun of the dawn, hurled down to the earth thou that didst throw down nations from above?

13. And thou, thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, and sit down on the mount of the assembly of gods in the corner of the north.

14. I will ascend to the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.

15. Nevertheless, thou wilt be cast down into the region of the dead, into the corner of the pit.

16. They that see thee, look, considering thee, look at thee thoughtfully: Is this the man that set the earth trembling, and kingdoms shaking?

17. That made the world a wilderness, and destroyed its cities, and did not release its prisoners (to their) home?

18. All the Kings of the nations, they are all interred in honor, every one in his house:

19. But thou art cast away from thy sepulchre like a shoot hurled away, clothed with slain, with those pierced through with the sword, those that go down to the stones of the pit; like a carcass trodden under feet.

20. Thou art not united with them in burial, for thou hast destroyed thy land, murdered thy people: the seed of evildoers will not be named forever.

21. Prepare a slaughter-house for his sons, because of the iniquity of their fathers! They shall not rise and conquer lands, and fill the face of the earth with cities.

22. And I will rise up against them, saith Jehovah of hosts, and root out in Babel name and remnant, sprout and shoot, saith Jehovah,

23. And make it the possession of hedgehogs and marshes of water, and sweep it away with the besom of destruction, saith Jehovah of hosts.

Digitized by Google

24. Jehovah of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, that takes place;

25. To break Ashur to pieces in my land, and upon my mountain will I tread him under foot: then his yoke departs from them, and his burden will depart from their neck.

26. This is the purpose that is purposed over the whole earth; and this the hand that is stretched out over all nations.

27. For Jehovah of hosts hath purposed, and who can bring it to nought? And His hand that is stretched out, who can turn it back.

28. In the year of the death of King Ahaz, the following sentence [oracle] was uttered.

29. Rejoice not so fully, O Philistia, that the rod which smote thee is broken to pieces; for out of the serpent's root comes forth a basilisk, and its fruit is a flying dragon.

30. And the poorest of the poor will feed, and needy ones lie down in peace; and I kill thy root through hunger, and he slays thy remnant.

31. Howl, O gate! cry, O city! O Philistia, thou must melt entirely away; for from the north cometh smoke, and there is no isolated one among his hosts.

32. And what answer do the messengers of the nations bring? That Jehovah hath founded Zion, and that the afflicted of His people are hidden therein.

Chapter XV.

Sentence [oracle] concerning Moab! for in a night Ar-Moab is laid waste, destroyed; for in a night Kir-Moab is laid waste, destroyed.

2. They go up to the temple-house and Dibon, up to the heights to weep: upon Nebo and upon Medebah of Moab there is weeping: on all heads baldness, every beard is mutilated.

3. In the markets of Moab they gird themselves with sackcloth; on the roofs of the land, and in its streets, everything wails, melting into tears.

4. Heshbon cries, and Elâleh; even to Jahaz they hear their howling; even the armed men of Moab break out into mourning thereat; its soul trembles within it.

5. My heart, towards Moab it crieth out; its bolts reached to Zoar, the three-year-old heifer. For the mountain slope of Luhith they ascend with weeping; for on the road to Horonayim they lift up the cry of despair.

6. For the waters of Nimrim are waste places from this time forth; for the grass is dried up, the vegetation wasteth away, the green is gone.

7. Therefore what has been spared, what has been gained, and their provision, they carry it over the willow-brook.

8. For the scream has gone the round in the territory of Moab; the wailing of Moab resounds to Eglayim, and his wailing to Beer-Elim.

9. For the waters of Dimon are full of blood: for I suspend over Dimon a new calamity, over the escaped of Moab a lion, and over the remnant of the land.

Chapter XVI.

Send a land-ruler's tribute of lambs from Sela desertwards to the mountain of the daughter of Zion.

2. And the daughters of Moab will be like birds fluttering about, a scared nest, at the fords of the Arnon.

3. Give counsel, form a decision, make thy shadow like night in the midst of noon; hide the outcasts, do not betray the wanderers.

4. Let mine outcasts tarry in thee, Moab; be a covert to it from before the spoiler. For the extortioner is at an end, desolation has disappeared, treaders down are away from the land.

5. And a throne is established by grace, and there sits thereon in truth in the tent of David one judging, and zealous for right, and practiced in righteousness.

6. We have heard of the pride of Moab, the very haughty [pride], his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath, the falsehood of his speech.

7. Therefore will Moab wail for Moab, everything will wail: for the grape-cakes of Kir-Hareseth will ye whine, utterly crushed.

8. For the fruitful fields of Heshbon have faded away: the vine of Sibmah, lords of the nations, its branches smote down; they reach

Digitized by Google

to Jazer, trailed through the desert: its branches spread themselves out wide, crossed over the sea.

9. Therefore I bemoan the vines of Sibmah with the weepings of Jazer; I flood thee with my tears, O Heshbon and Elealeh, that Hêdad hath fallen upon thy fruit-harvest and upon thy vintage.

10. And joy is taken away, and the rejoicing of the garden-land; and there is no exulting, no shouting in the vineyards: the treader treads out no wine in the presses; I put an end to the Hedad [the joyous shout of the grape-treaders].

11. Therefore my bowels sound for Moab like a harp, and my inside for Kir-Heres.

12. And it will come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary with weeping upon the mountain height, and enters into its sanctuary to pray, it will not gain anything.

13. This is the word which Jehovah spake long ago concerning Moab.

14. And now Jehovah speaketh thus: In three years, like years of a hireling, the glory of Moab is disgraced, together with all the multitude of the great; a remnant is left, contemptibly small, not great at all.

Chapter XVII.

Sentence [oracle] concerning Damascus. Behold, Damascus must away out of the number of the cities, and will be a heap of fallen ruins.

2. The cities of Aroer are forsaken, they are given up to flocks, they lie there without any one scaring them away.

3. And the fortress of Ephraim is abolished, and the kingdom of Damascus; and it happens to those that are left of Aram as to the glory of the sons of Israel, saith Jehovah of hosts.

4. And it comes to pass in that day, the glory of Jacob wastes away, and the fat of his flesh grows thin.

5. And it will be as when a reaper grasps the stalks of wheat, and his arm mows off the ears; and it will be as with one who gathers together ears in the valley of Rephaim.

6. Yet a gleaning remains from it, as at the olive-beating: two, three berries high up at the top; four, five in its, the fruit tree's, branches, saith Jehovah the God of Israel.

7. At that day will man look up to his Creator, and his eyes will look to the Holy One of Israel.

8. And he will not look to the altars, the work of his hands; and what his fingers have made he will not regard, neither the Astartes nor the sun-gods.

9. In that day will his fortified cities be like the ruins of the forest and of the mountain top, which they cleared before the sons of Israel: and there arises a waste place.

10. For thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not thought of the Rock of thy stronghold, therefore thou plantedst charming plantations, and didst set them with strange vines.

11. In the day that thou plantedst, thou didst make a fence; and with the morning dawn thou madest thy sowing to blossom: a harvest heap in the day of deep wounds and deadly sorrow of heart.

12. Woe to the roaring of many nations: like the roaring of seas they roar; and to the rumbling of nations: like the rumbling of mighty waters they rumble!

13. Nations, like the rumbling of many waters they rumble; and He threatens it: then it flies far away, and is chased like chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a cloud of dust before the gale.

14. At eventide, behold consternation; and before the morning dawn it is destroyed: this is the portion of our plunderers, and the lot of our robbers.

THE MAGICIANS OF EGYPT.

It sounds strangely to hear one high in place in the Church say, as we lately heard such a one say, that the miracles of the magicians of Egypt were of a class with mere sleight of hand wonders, practiced by jugglers. But were their acts, when before Pharaoh they "withstood Moses," mere sleight of hand? Was it all seeming—all pretence, and nothing real?

If we have reason to believe that that performed by them was mere sleight of hand, then we have reason to believe that all the wonder-

Digitized by Google

ful things ascribed to other opposers of God, were mere sleight of hand. Sad conclusion! They did not do what the Bible says they did! They merely deceived Pharaoh and the people! So when the Bible tells us in Revelation, of coming opposers who will work miracles, it will not be so, it will be mere sleight of hand—mere juggling! Perhaps, as we are now dealing with perhapses, it was mere sleight of hand—mere jugglery. Perhaps then the miracles of Jesus were of like character: and perhaps then—! Admit a perhaps in one instance, and you open a flood-gate to perhapses that will sweep everything to ruin. Make one such admission, and we know not where we are to end—what we are to take for truth, and what not—what was really miraculous, and what not. If God has so written as to deceive, why may He not have so acted as to deceive? Why may not His miracles have been deceptive?

The Bible says the magicians "cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents" (Ex. 7: 12.) Of the changing of water into blood it is said, "And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments." (Ex. 7: 22.) "And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought forth frogs upon the land of Egypt." (Ex. 8: 7.) "And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but could not; so there were lice upon man and upon beast. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God." (Ex. 8: 18, 19.)

Not one of these is related as some thing that was merely seeming—merely deceptive. The language is positive. Now if it was merely sleight of hand, when the Bible says they did so, why may not all that Moses is said to have done, have been merely sleight of hand, and he merely a more accomplished juggler than either of the magicians?

To have this doubt begotten by one occupying one of the very highest places in our Israel, renders the evil so much the greater. Very many Christians look up to such as authority. They would wellnigh suspect the orthodoxy of any one who would not yield implicit assent to all they teach. I am confident there is too frequently doubt cast upon the being, personality, power, and desperate character of Satan. Having disposed of the arch-fiend, it is easy to get clear of the supernatural about his subs and agents. Their master being shorn of his power, and, perhaps, of his existence, there can be nothing extraordinary—nothing extra natural or supernatural about any of the doings of those who act in his name.

Many theologians, as well as skeptics, would erase from the Bible all that is supernatural, except, perhaps, what can be assigned to God and His prophets. There are Christians, as well as infidels, who are too fearful of the supernatural. They would wellnigh place an impassable gulf between this world and the other, over which departing spirits do pass, but may not return, and no other spirit can, except, perhaps, Satan.

I do not know how Satan could have had such power given to him, but I do not doubt the facts as recorded in the Bible. So I do not know how Satan could give such power to his subs and agents, but the facts are explicitly stated in the Book of God, and I dare not doubt them. Satan himself has often acted directly, and often through his agents, but in either case, and in every case, he can do nothing without God's permit, nor go any farther than He permits. How Satan can act as he has done, and as he will do, is a mystery; but if we believe nothing except what we understand, ours will be a very short creed. We must not limit the Bible by our understanding. When we shall cease to know in part, then we will know, not only that Satan and his agents have done all the Bible says they have, but know the how.

In the case of the magicians of Egypt, they went along step by step, doing all that Moses did, as long as God permitted them. By and by Satan was restrained and his servants could do no more; but were constrained to acknowledge the finger of God. How supernatural powers were given to evil spirits or evil men, to Moses or to a very good man, we know not, and need not know. It was often difficult to distinguish between the false and the true prophet. There was no sleight of hand about the one more than the other. The ecstasy was

Digitized by Google

in both cases alike real; but the inspiring spirits were different—as different as the divine and the infernal. The "afflatus" of the one was divine, the Holy Ghost spoke through them, in the other it was Satanic or demoniacal; but both were alike real.

Through his agents, the priests of the Gentiles, the magicians, &c., Satan, in the heathen world, has, by God's permission, in different ages, been doing that which to us is miraculous; and he will do it again. To doubt this is to doubt God's word. According to Revelation, he will do it as long as he is unbound. To doubt this, is to give him an advantage. As his time shortens, we need not marvel, if he perform that which is to us, as strange and unaccountable as that which he did in Egypt. Satan has not become extinct. His power to perform the miraculous is the same as of old, except as God restrains him; and certainly his morals have not in the least improved. It has ever been his policy to conceal himself—to hide his cloven foot. He would have men doubt his existence; and doubt his agency in all his subs do or have done. He is especially fond of having great and good men discredit his power and his agency—to fear no evil from him. But let men beware how they doubt. J. B.

Selections.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE ADVENT.

FROM E. V. GERHART, D.D.

Looking backward, Christianity includes the Person, the personal life, the work, and the perfection of Christ in His glorification, as antecedent to the proper founding of the Church on the day of Pentecost. Looking forward, Christianity takes in teleologically, as being essential to the completeness of divine revelation, the Second Coming of Christ and all the last events, among these the passing away of the present mundane order, the resurrection, the destruction of death, and the transition of the Church from the state militant to the state triumphant. This transition implies an organic change in her constitution—a change in kind and degree like that which her living Head underwent in passing from His state in the flesh to His state in glory.

Now the Church is in her true state. This is intermediate between the ascension and glorification of her Head, and His coming again to judge the quick and the dead. She is indeed His mystical body, the actual Christianity, the established economy in which Christ lives and reigns on the earth. But the Church is the actual Christianity only in a relative, not in an absolute sense. It is self-evident, that the actualization cannot be more complete than the objective truth which is actualized; that the economy cannot be more perfect than the mystery which originates, warrants, and fills the economy.

Christianity is itself only relatively complete. The Second Advent is still a future fact, not yet a reality; but though not yet real, it is nevertheless the culminating fact of divine revelation. It is the final grand event. This event will not be superadded, externally, to all previous acts of Jesus Christ, assuming that these are in and for themselves final and whole; but, being inwardly and dynamically related to the Church, to Pentecost, and the Ascension, it will come as the full ripe fruit of all antecedent revelation, and thus be the perfection, not only of Christianity, as to its general idea, but at the same time also of every necessary fact and element that enters into its constitution.

So mysteriously is the Second Advent related to every previous fact of revelation, that to deny it is to resolve the entire Christian Faith into a delusive, empty dream; or to ignore it, and yet endeavor whilst ignoring it, to form a true conception of the Church or of our Lord, is to be so far forth necessarily disqualified for the attempt. Every conception of Christianity formed in the light only of what has thus far been brought to pass in the actual

Digitized by Google

history of the world, will be as defective as was the conception which the unbelieving Pharisees formed of Moses and the Mosaic economy, whilst they refused to recognize in the incarnate Word, or in the First Advent of Christ, the true end and fulfilment of the ceremonial economy which God established by Moses. Or, it is like an attempt to pass judgment on the meaning of the "blade" whilst we leave out of view the relation which the "ear," and the "full corn in the ear" bear to the blade.

There is another analogy that is still closer and more pertinent. The Second Advent is related to the antecedent revelation like the resurrection of Christ from the dead to His crucifixion, His life in the flesh and holy nativity. The force and meaning of these mysterious facts became manifest by His victory over death. Until then their virtue was in abeyance,—was not an actual power of redemption. Being thus concretely related, we can form no Christian conception of His death but in the light of His resurrection. Could we suppose, that Christ did not really rise from the dead, we would by the supposition at once resolve His life into a delusion or imposture, and reduce His crucifixion to the character of an heroic or merely tragical event.

So does the Second Advent fulfil and make real the sense and purpose of Pentecost, or the true nature and virtue of the Church. Sin still prevails, though it is the mission of the Church to save men from sin. Death still reigns over all men, saints and sinners, notwithstanding the promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church. There is in her bosom forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Yet the law of sin is not abolished, and eternal life is still only possible and potential, not a realized fact. The possible and potential will become a glorious reality when Christ shall consummate the mystery of grace in His Second Coming; and in the consummation of His revelation also consummate with Himself His mystical body. Until then the true nature and full meaning of the present militant, interimistic period of Christianity, can as little manifest and authenticate itself perfectly, as could the victory of Christ, achieved in His death, be made manifest before He came forth in triumph from the state of the dead.

In the Second Advent, accordingly, Christianity will become the absolutely complete divine revelation.

THE AGE WE LIVE IN.

We live in an age in which all the evils of wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, floods and fires, are or have been suffered. There is something for serious reflection in this. When the judgments of God are abroad in the earth it is a time when thoughts of His sovereignty and justice and power should make men learn righteousness. When fellow-beings are suffering such desolation and distress it is a time when tender sympathy should be excited and liberal benevolence exercised.

It is a time, too, that has a historical interest. It has been observed in the history of the world, that the close of one great historical age and the beginning of another, has generally been marked by startling events in the natural world and the social and national affairs of men. It It was so when Medo-Persian dominance in the world gave place to Grecian power and civilization. It was so again when Rome became dominant, when Christianity was introduced, and afterwards at the time of its reformation. Why it should be so we may not be able to explain further than by the fact, that the same God who rules in nature also rules in the history of nations, and that his mighty workings in the moral are felt in the physical world.—*United Presbyterian.*

SERPENTS IN THE HOME-NEST.

Why is the sin of licentiousness (in all its phases) growing so rapidly?

(1.) One cause is the growth of a licentious literature. The unclean "frogs" are creeping up into our "kneading-troughs." The news-stands and the news-rooms are stacked up with pictorial journals that are enough to make a harlot blush. One of these filthy sheets is reported to surpass *Harper's Weekly* in extent of publication! And every such lecherous paper that enters a family becomes a serpent in the nest. But the filthy journals do not

Digitized by Google

stand alone. Some of the fictitious literature that is read by the rich and the cultured is fairly rotted through with immorality. I have seen scores of well-dressed people in cars and cabins who had in their hands a popular and poisonous book called "The Terrible Temptation." I only know of its contents by credible report; but I should think the volume is a "terrible temptation" to lash soundly its author and its publishers. Passion-exciting books have pioneered more than one seduction. It is said that the only books found in brothels are novels.

(2.) A second source of demoralization has been the attractive indecencies of an indecent stage. Thousands of men and women have gone *together* (are we sure that there were no Church-members among them?) to gaze on these lewd exhibitions. One thing these patrons of the licentious play-house ought to know, and that is that in God's sight those in front of the stage are just as guilty as the half-nude creatures who are on the stage. Who can tell how often an evening at the theatre has paved the way to such dens of death as Rosenzsweig's or Restell's?

(3.) A third root of licentiousness is found in the prevailing passion for display. The history of prostitution has proved how often infatuated women have been ready to defile their souls in order to decorate their bodies. A good man in Chicago, who took the trouble lately to answer some of the "Personal" advertisements, discovered that several of the female authors of them lived in respectable streets, and were intent on selling their honor to purchase fine dress. Satan baits his hooks for men with dollars, and for women with dress.

(4.) A fourth source of sexual immorality is the growing rage for social dissipations. These weaken the conscience, inflame the passions, and sensualize the very soul. The ball-room, with its indelicate dress, and its promiscuous caresses, and its wine-suppers, leads the giddy young man and maiden to the *verge!* The next step is—over the precipice. And young people ought to know that it takes but *one* step to go down Niagara! The poor, pitiable girls whose names have lately been dragged before a horror-stricken public took but that single step. When and how they did it is known now only to Him into whose presence their sad and fatal sins have summoned them.

We have written these plain words mainly for the eyes and consciences of *parents*. Blessed be that household that has no serpents in the nest! "Blessed are the *pure in heart*; for they shall see God." This whole subject is one of infinite moment to our whole people; for no nation has yet survived widespread unchastity!—*Independent.*

ROMAN CATHOLIC TESTIMONY.

From a Sermon by Rev. Thomas F. Hopkins, on the Evilness of the Times.

WHEN I approach this subject, I seem to hear the excuse which constant repetition has rendered trite. We are told that the world is no worse now than it ever was; that there were always good and bad men mingled in every walk of life. And this is to some extent true. No doubt, from the days of the creation, among Jews and heathens, as well as among Christians, there were always to be found robbers, murderers, adulterers, blasphemers, unjust extortioners. The pages of history stand blotted with the record of the dark deeds of tyrants, oppressors of the weak, powerful ones in whose hands power was but the means of unjust extortion. And yet, we may well ask, was crime ever so frequent, so general as in our days; was it ever less feared or more warmly excused than now? Was there ever a period in which the noblest creations of human genius were so debased to unworthy purposes, in which the press was so used to flood the land with productions carrying with them that which poisons the soul by robbing it of innocence? Was there ever a time in which bad books and bad papers, these hell-inspired destroyers of virtue and honor, found warmer defence or more general patronage? Was there ever shown a more general disposition to throw open the gates of Heaven to those to whom they must stand closed by the decrees of Christ and of His divinely-taught Church? When did men pray less, and practice less self-denial. When was God less feared, His law less regarded, less frequently, and less boldly trampled

Digitized by Google

upon? When did the spirit of lukewarmness, of indifference, reign so wildly as it does at present? When were virtue, piety, strict uprightness, unwavering honesty, retiring modesty which blushed the deeper at the very thought of danger—when were all these so ridiculed, so despised, as in these our days? Where are, to-day, the solemn requirements of the Gospel law? Where is true Christian love for one's neighbor to be found; where is that spirit of charity which embraces not merely the friend (for this much do the heathens also), but which folds in the arms of forgiveness and love the very enemy from whom we had suffered a great wrong? Where find we patience and perseverance in the pursuit of virtue's often thorny path, where fidelity to every duty, where filial confidence in God, where the fear of the Lord? A sad picture of the times in which we live, but who shall say that it is not a true one? Is there no remedy? Can our anxious gaze discover no break in this dark cloud which so heavily overhangs the world? Is there no voice that may be raised, and in the thunder tones of truth and authority say to this raging torrent, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther?"

THE CHRISTIAN'S ATTITUDE.

"TO WAIT FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN."

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."—MATT. 25 : 13.

"I stand continually upon the watch-tower."—ISA. 21 : 8.

I STAND on my watch-tower, Jesus,
Watching for Thee;
For I know Thou wilt soon be coming
To summon me.
I am up in the early morning,
Ere the sunrise,
Piercing the gray streaks of dawning
With eager eyes.
I am *longing*, continually longing,
Thy summons to hear—
"Arise ye! prepare for the wedding;
The Bridegroom draws near!"
Oh, how shall I greet Thee, my Jesus,
What joy shall be mine,
When, all doubts and anxieties leaving,
Thou claimest me Thine?
What happiness just to behold Thee,
And gaze on Thy face,
While still in that visage of beauty
Thy wounds I shall trace!
And as sure as Thou livest and reignest
In heaven above,
So surely Thou never wilt sever
Thy Bride from Thy love.

I stand on my watch-tower, Jesus,
Looking for Thee;
For I know Thou art shortly coming
To summon me.
So I stand in the noontide gladly,
'Neath the hot sun's scorching rays,
To greet Thee when Thou comest
With a song of loving praise.
Mine eyes with looking upward
Are failing; yet to see
One glimpse of Thine appearing
Is rapture, ecstasy!
So still I'll pierce through distance,
Though clouds may cross my sky,
With this wondrous thought before me—
"I shall see Him eye to eye."
No darkness then between us;
The veil shall be withdrawn,
And the evening mists have vanished
In the brightness of *that morn*.
So I'll bear the heat and burden
Of this present "*little while*,"
Till Thou come and light my spirit
With the sunshine of Thy smile.

I stand on my watch-tower, Jesus,
Longing for Thee.
Thou hast said Thou wilt come unexpected
To summon me
The shadows of evening have lengthened,
The night wears apace;
And I'm watching, still watching, my Jesus,
For Thy glorious face.
How long wilt Thou "tarry," Lord Jesus?
Oh! when wilt Thou "quickly come?"
Haste! "hasten the wheels of Thy chariot,"
I *long*, oh! I long to be home.
Thou biddest me "watch and be ready,"
With my lamp burning brightly for Thee;
For at "evening, or midnight, or morning,"
Thou mayest suddenly come and fetch me.
Then let me not weary or falter,
Though darkness my spirit enshroud,
This night *must* give place to the morning—
The "morning without a cloud."
"With patience," my soul, I'll possess thee
(Leaving all to his wisdom and power),
Content with the message He sends me,
"Ye know not the day nor the hour."

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

NO CONTINUING CITY.

Such a calamity as the burning of Chicago does not happen in every generation. It is not often that God speaks to men in such tones.

On the rude and miry prairie soil, as we knew it twenty-five years ago, there had been erected one of the finest cities of the American continent, with a larger proportion of elegant buildings and a more comprehensive system of public works than most of the older cities of the country possess. It was to be expected that the men who built that city, who projected its great enterprises, and made it the commercial metropolis of that rich cluster of states which border on the broad lakes and rivers that form so marked a feature of Central North America, should point with pride to the city of their building, and that its citizens generally should exult in it, as a marvel of American civilization and a splendid triumph of human progress.

But in one night all that splendor vanished. The most of the wealth garnered there during these years of toil, all of those magnificent palaces of trade and travel, with thousands of its elegant homes and many thousands of those more humble, all vanished before the terrible onslaught of the demon of fire, whose tongues of flame, like a blast from the presence of the Lord, overleaped all barriers, overtaking many of the frightened inhabitants, fleeing for their lives, and dissolving all that dream of human glory into a vista of charred and sickly ruin.

From a personal acquaintance with the burnt district, we believe that the worst accounts of the character and extent of the destruction do not exaggerate it, and that it will be some time before even the stricken inhabitants will be able to measure the magnitude of the disaster.

Among the multiplied lessons of this event we regard this as the most solemn and significant. The Providence of God is therein enforcing upon the attention of the Church and also of the world, the declaration of His word, that, "Here have we no continuing city." Beyond the general admonitions, which all Christians would derive from such an event, such as the insecurity of earthly riches, and the danger of extreme absorption in worldly business, we discover a special rebuke to the vain expectation, the world is to be gradually improved and built up into a continuing city. It is this which, in these last days, has so largely displaced in the mind of the Church the blessed hope of the Gospel. It is responsible indeed for much of the pride and worldliness which we all see to be rebuked by this fiery judgment. Christians, who are identified with the enterprises and buoyant hopes of a place like Chicago, are under the strongest temptation to forget the true character of this present world, and of the nature and hope of the Christian's calling. The grace of God, which bringeth us salvation, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, *looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* (Titus 2: 11–13.) Until that event we have not and cannot have that continuing city, which is the hope of all prophecy and the dream of humanity. The grand indictment against the world is that it expects to achieve for itself this salvation without Christ. And the error of the wicked, by which multitudes of Christians are led astray, is the adoption of some vain theory of human progress, which lures them on by the empty promise of the world's regeneration without the coming of Christ to effect it, and beguiles them into the belief that they are co-laborers with God in building up the interests of humanity, at the same time that they are building up their own.

Most Christians seem to forget that the word of God puts the world, as now constituted, under the bar of judgment. Whatever changes may pass upon it, whatever improved phases society may take on, whatever its appointed round of experiment before its final failure, this still remains true of it. Judgment was

Digitized by Google

pronounced upon it and its Prince, when it crucified the Lord of glory. And the grandest city of its building, the metropolis of its final brotherhood of nations, will be but a Babylon, whose great riches must be brought to nought in one hour, and whose towering palaces must be utterly burned with fire. And this because sin has introduced such radical disorder, such essential evil into this present world, that its necessary development is in the line of apostasy from God and self-exalting progress, in its vain endeavor to realize the deceitful hope, in which this apostasy began, "Ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil."

There are mysteries of discipline for the human race in all this, into which we cannot enter, and which no man can explain. But this is the end of this long career. The proudest city which man shall ever build; his best constructed commonwealth, although it embrace all nations, cannot continue. "All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man but the flower of grass." At the revelation of God's commonwealth of the future; at the coming down out of Heaven of the city of His building, no flesh shall glory in His presence. All the praise of our individual salvation, all the glory of that corporate salvation which God has in store for the human race, will be given to the Lord Jesus. It is only under Him, and on the platform of a world renewed, and under the vivifying power of that new life, in which God raised Him from the dead, that mankind shall be organized into a continuing city.

Now if Christians forget this, as was the case with many of our brethren in Chicago, and as is the case all over Christendom; if, forgetting that they are heirs of that city which is to come, they employ their energies in building this human city about which we have been speaking, as if that could realize the promised kingdom, what else can be expected but that God should interfere to expose this dangerous delusion and dissipate these worldly hopes by such chastising strokes.

We know that in that city, and everywhere, Christian character has been hindered or abnormally developed under the sway of this error, by which the hope of the Christian and of the Church, as set forth in the word of God, has been blighted and the dangerous fiction substituted, that it is the mission of the Christian to help build up that continuing city we all look for by striving to improve this present world and elevate it up to the level of the promised kingdom of God. Whereas, the prophetic warning of Scripture, first sounded in the Old Testament. (Haggai 2: 6, 7), and quoted and explained in the new (Heb. 12: 26–28) is, that before the desire of all nations shall come, God hath promised to shake the heavens and the earth and to throw down all things that can be shaken, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. And that therefore Christians, as the heirs of this coming order, having received a kingdom which cannot be moved, must seek great grace while waiting for this change, that they may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. *For our God is a consuming fire.*

We have spoken of the lesson of this catastrophe to Christians. Its voice to the world is no less solemn and significant. It proclaims to all men that here they can never attain a continuing city, and that all their self-reliant efforts apart from God, and of which Christ is not the corner-stone must end in overthrow. And Chicago is not the only lesson the world is now receiving in this direction. Paris in the old world, New York in the new, have furnished other aspects of the same great truth that modern civilization cannot build, nor even lay the foundations of the continuing city. There are certain grand essentials that must enter into the construction of such a city:

1. Its populace must all be subordinated to the reign of truth and righteousness.

2. There must be perfect integrity in the administration of its affairs.

3. Its splendid emporiums and dwellings must not be the product of wrong or greed, or a merely human energy, which does not glorify God in all its projects; and

4. It must be built of materials which cannot be made the sport and prey of those mighty untamed forces, which ran riot at Chicago the other night, and made such utter havoc of its grandeur.

Digitized by Google

Now as to the ability of men to construct a city with these elements of perpetuity, let Paris, New York, and Chicago answer. In Paris, within the past year, the gayest and most splendid capital of Europe, the exponent of the highest old world civilization, we have had the spectacle of discontented riotous masses, led on by fiery spirits, whose selfish ambition was clouded to their own minds by visionary theories of human progress, clamoring for the obliteration of all traces of the old system of society, mocking at the family, the basis of social order, and at religion, its safeguard, and eager to bury the monuments of its glory beneath a deluge of fire and blood. It is estimated that at least two hundred millions of the wealth of that city was destroyed in the revolution under the Commune. And Paris (and the same is true of other large cities in which both the grandeur and the sin of the world are condensed) still stands on the thin crust of a social order, beneath which the fires of human passion are seething. These may at any time break forth in resistless might. Can man build that continuing city for which we look? Let Paris, with its communism, its reign of blood and terror, its carnival of worldliness and sin, its fickle feverish masses, give the answer.

Again, the continuing city must be an administration of perfect righteousness. The righteous must be exalted to its seats of honor and trust, and integrity rule in all its affairs.

Here in the new world, where it was fondly believed society had thrown off the incubus of old world forms, which had proved themselves to be effete and corrupt, and where liberty and the political fraternity of rich and poor are corner-stones in the social edifice, our commercial metropolis has furnished an example of man's ability in this direction. In New York there has lately been unearthed evidences of the most astounding frauds to which municipal government in the hands of men has ever attained. Even Dr. Bellows, the distinguished Unitarian preacher of that city, has told us that the moral ashes of New York is a far sadder and more discouraging spectacle than the dust and cinders which now lie in heaps over those blasted fields where once Chicago stood. Can men erect that continuing city, fashioned after the similitude of a palace, its walls salvation and its gates praise, its officers peace and its exactors righteousness? Let New York be the answer.

Again, in a continuing city its garnered wealth must be the product of righteous and benevolent dealing between man and man; not the result of selfish and aggressive rivalries in trade. Its structures must be monuments not merely of business enterprise, but of that activity which begins and ends all its works in God and for His glory.

Moreover, the materials of such a city must be beyond the dissolving power of those forces of nature which made sport even with the stone and iron out of which Chicago's stately rows of stores and dwellings were built.

All things in this present order, even the most solid materials of this round globe, are merely the resultants of potent forces, held in mechanical and chemical equipoise by their mutual check one upon another. These forces may be unloosed. Fervent heat, which is one of them, may unbridle all the rest. Even iron will burn and stones melt in such a furnace blast as that of those destructive angels who swept the doomed city with the besom of destruction. These powers of nature are God's executioners of judgment. And some day, it may be soon, Christ shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels to search the fabric of all human works and achievements. Can men construct a city which shall abide the day of His coming? Then all the pomp and pageantry of this world must pass beneath His burning glance. All the splendid fabrics of human enterprise must be searched through and through. And even the most enduring materials which men can dig from the womb of the earth, with which to build their continuing city, shall not stand the heat of that day of fire. Men may mock at the threat of such a day of judgment, and vainly imagine that they can build a city which shall abide. But the calamity at Chicago which has just startled the world, may well serve as a premonitory token that the wrath of God shall one day be revealed from heaven against all ungodliness

Digitized by Google

and unrighteousness of men, and that the most solid structures, built of the firmest substances, can afford no refuge against that storm of fire.

What then is that continuing city for which we look? The term "*city*" in Scripture, as defining the polity or kingdom of the future, is broader than in our use of the word. In addition to the idea of an organized city, in which men are compacted into masses, and which are the nerve centres of the body politic, it includes the idea of the commonwealth. It describes that coming social order, in which the human race shall be organized in peace and righteousness, under the Lord as King. Most persons are expecting the world to grow into such a system without the coming of Christ. Most of the sermons of the day, directed against municipal corruption or mammon worship, look to no other remedy for these evils than the gradual extension of the civilizing and Christianizing influences to which mankind is already indebted for its social improvement. Such teachers forget that this very enlightenment, which we all recognize and are thankful for, puts the nations under increased responsibility, and makes all the more odious in the sight of heaven that confidence in the flesh, which overlooks its inborn corruption; which would make man to be his own saviour, and destroy in the breasts of the Lord's people the hope of His coming. The progress of the world seems to have fostered rather than to have diminished its endeavor to build itself up into a grand brotherhood of nations, of which Christ is not the corner-stone. It is its darling dream that mankind is quite capable of furnishing the materials for such a structure, without submission to the only conditions the word of God prescribes as necessary, and without the promised intervention of the Lord Jesus from heaven to put the lever of His mighty regenerating power beneath all the sources of its moral and physical evil.

Now it is this very vain confidence, fostered by its temporary successes and the slight healings of its hurt, which shall provoke God to put mankind on that final trial which shall issue in its crowning humiliation. His unchanging word declares that there can be no radical, permanent renewal of man or of society, or of the earth blighted with the curse, except as Christ shall effect it. And it indissolubly connects that kingdom of the future, in which all the malign powers who perpetuate this reign of sin unto death are put beneath His feet, with His appearing.

The heavenly polity or city of the future is mankind organized under the direct rule of a man of altogether higher order than man in the flesh, the risen man, Christ Jesus. That this is the final destiny of the race all the prophets bear witness. A certain portion of mankind, under the preaching of the Gospel, is now being gathered out from the nations. They are made to know Him and the power of His resurrection. And at His coming, they shall be raised or changed after the fashion of His glorious body. They shall be thus invested with those powers and prerogatives, which shall qualify them to be associates with Him in His kingdom. As the curse, which weighs men down, pervades the whole natural system to which they belong; as the whole creation is under the yoke of this bondage to corruption, so the deliverance must reach as far as the curse is found. Christ and his saints under Him, are the anointed ones to introduce and administer this salvation. They alone can grapple with these evils at their sources, and become the almoners of heaven's bounty and blessedness to the earth long ravaged by the destroyer. This new and heavenly order of men must be therefore the fundamental element in that economy of the future, which is the continuing city. There must be a first resurrection. (Rev. 20: 5, 6.) And hence the Church, the Lamb's wife, is seen to be identical with the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21), the holy city, built of stones of preciousness, jasper, emerald, sapphire, which comes down from God out of heaven. The vision presents to us this divine company and the place of their abode, the citizens and the city. Both must be comprehended in the idea of a city, just as the term "City of London" includes both the idea of the material city and its inhabitants.

But we are told that in the light of this city "the nations" shall walk. For the addition

Digitized by Google

"*of them that are saved*" (Rev. 21 : 24) is discarded from all the late critical editions of the text. "*The nations,*" (we should read) "*shall walk in the light of it;* and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor unto it." Here then we have the second element in the continuing city. It is mankind organized on the earth into nations under the beneficent ministry and rule of the risen saints, the Church, the Lamb's wife. The heavens long barred against us, are at last opened. Happy concord and intercourse is at length established between earth and Heaven. The vision of Jacob's dream is realized. And the messengers along the golden stairs are the risen saints. And the point of contact between the heavenly and the earthly order, the gate of heaven will be the earthly Jerusalem restored. That city will be the centre of a world-wide polity embracing all nations. While the glorious walls and palaces of the heavenly Jerusalem shall overhang in the heavens the city of God's delight on earth, as the pillar of cloud overhung the camp of Israel in the desert. From this mountain of the Lord's house, exalted above the mountains, the nations shall receive the law of the Lord (Isa. 2), and universal righteousness and peace prevail. Through the ministry of Christ and His saints men shall be so protected from the malign influences, which have hitherto debased them that their systems of social order, of commerce and of trade, their cities in which the grandeur of that golden age shall be condensed, shall no longer be built up by wrong or greed, or cursed with the vampires of vice and corruption. Such will be their control over the secret forces of nature that these sometimes raging tyrants shall be tamed and docile servants. Men shall no longer build magnificent structures to be consumed. "They shall build houses and dwell in them," and "long enjoy the work of their hands." For the outshining of the manifested glory of the sons of God from their tabernacle in the heavens shall shed peace and order on the earth, and through the wide domain of nature, now rocked and sometimes frenzied with the throes of that disorder which human sin has brought upon it.

Such, in brief, is that continuing city, which the word of God assures us we have not here, and which the faith, first delivered to the saints, always made dependent upon the coming of Christ to bind and overthrow the god of this world, to resurrect His saints out from the mass of the dead, and to commence those divine administrations which shall reach down the ages and issue in putting all things in earth and under the earth and in Heaven under His royal feet.

Such being the character of that city which hath foundations, we can understand how pilgrimage is now the necessary law of discipleship. There is no room in this present age for that city which is to come. The heirs of it must come into conflict with its reigning spirit. In the multiplied forms in which it solicits them to identify themselves with its schemes and hopes, they are to remember and obey this word: "Let us go forth unto Him, without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

L. C. B.

LET NO MAN DECEIVE YOU.

THERE are many professed teachers of prophetic truth, who are really much interested in the doctrine of our Lord's coming, but who will persist in putting forward events to take place before that coming can occur. Recently again, we were favored with "a synopsis of future events," in which the return of the Jews to the Holy Land, and the great campaign of the nations against the restored Jerusalem, are set down as things to take place before the Advent of the Saviour to raise and translate His saints.

Now we regard all such teaching as very dangerous, unauthorized, and in the face of the inculcations of holy Scripture. Unquestionably, if Christ is not to come until the Jews repossess Palestine, rebuild Jerusalem, and the nations muster their armies against it, these things being regarded as still in the future, it is not rationally possible to occupy that attitude of constant watching and expectancy of Christ's coming which the New Testament

Digitized by Google

everywhere so particularly enjoins. Either the coming of the Saviour is an impending event, with nothing ascertainable between us and it, and liable to occur any day or night, or else we play the fool in counting upon its occurrence before such intervening events have transpired. We cannot really expect our Lord's return now, if we are persuaded that it cannot take place until the Jews have been restored, Jerusalem rebuilt, and the armies of the nations gather to attack it. The two things cannot stand together. Either we are in total ignorance of anything yet precedent to the Lord's coming, or else we must in our hearts and thoughts postpone that coming until after these precedent events have come to pass. And yet, all such postponement is in direct conflict with Christ's precepts on the subject, and with the attitude, statements, and admonitions of the apostles respecting it.

Whether the Jews are to be restored to Palestine or not, is a separate question. And whatever may be the truth on that point, it cannot be allowed to disturb the uniform and unmistakable teaching of the New Testament, that it is the business and duty of Christians of every age to be awaiting and expecting their Lord's return as a thing which, for aught they know or can know, may occur at any moment. For our part, we look for no further manifestation of Antichrist, no league with the Jews, no return of apostate Israel to Judea, no restoration of Jerusalem and the Jewish polity, as necessarily intervening, or as known to man to intervene, between us and the παρουσια of our blessed Lord. The επιφανεια may be another matter; but the plain word is, that we know not what hour the Lord may come, that neither man nor angel knows it, and that it is the Christian's great business to expect, watch, and keep in constant readiness, as if any moment might bring to his ears the voice of the archangel and of the trump of God.

We therefore feel bound to warn men, and to call upon them to beware against giving credit to systems or teachings of prophetic exposition which put into the foreground any event whatever as needing yet to be fulfilled before our Saviour's promised return can occur. Satan is very subtle. Were it possible he would deceive the very elect. And however firmly any such scheme or teaching may seem to be seated in the Scriptures, let no one trust to receive it, lest he thereby bring all his glorious hopes into jeopardy. Rather "watch, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

"RESURRECTION OF THE REDEEMED."

THIS is the title of a neat little volume, written by Rev. James Boggs, 1330 Tiernan Street, Philadelphia. It is a book of solid thoughts well expressed. We have read it with satisfaction, and cheerfully commend it to the attention and examination of our readers. It treats of the Resurrection of the Redeemed, and sets forth the vital character and import of that great doctrine of our holy religion; of the Difficulties and practical Duties of Life, showing how to deal with obscurities in the Scriptures, the inequalities and mysteries of Providence, the inconsistencies of professors of religion, &c.; of the Justice of God, showing what it is, and how inexorably it must stand; of Christ's agony in the garden, explaining the true nature of that cup which was put to our Saviour's lips; of the Beginning and End of Time; and of *Hades*, or the state of the dead. Each of these particulars is handled with originality, point, and power, and all is given with striking brevity and clearness. We make bold to quote some paragraphs, which may serve to give an idea of the style of the book, which we hope may be extensively and thoughtfully read.

"Time is not something which belongs to earth alone, but it is common to all worlds, whether that world has inhabitants or not. All who believe the Bible must admit that before there was a vegetable or animal on earth, there was time. Whether the Genesic days were only twenty-four hours, or thousands of years, there must have been time. While the whole earth was covered with water, there was a first and a second day. Days are time. What is true of one world, is true of all, whether they

Digitized by Google

have a living being on them or not. How long time has existed on them, depends on how long it is since they were created.

"Could we imagine that this earth shall 'pass away as the baseless fabric of a vision,' and all terrestrial things cease to be, still, time would roll on—time would not end. Indeed, the annihilation of all worlds, except that which is the throne of God, would not annihilate time. . . .

"In the computation of earthly time, its commencement was with the first day; and it will have no end. Of time in the heaven, we can neither speak of its beginning nor end. We cannot say it had a beginning, and we are sure it will have no end. Time is the measurement of eternity. The ages are its grand divisions."

We quote also from the remarks on God's justice:

"While I fear and tremble, I bless God that He has permitted the introduction of sin, and the trials consequent upon it. Yet few can say that their flesh shrinks more from it than mine.

"Through all the trials and temptations of this world, is the royal and glorious way to heavenly and eternal greatness. Hence Peter could say, 'Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.' James says, 'My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations (trials); knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.' Paul says, 'For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?'

"Men chasten and correct their own sons, whom they would save from folly and sin, They act kindly, wisely, mercifully, and righteously in so doing. Our heavenly Father, in love, mercy, goodness, and wisdom, does the same by His children; and He does right in doing so.

"God often causes the wrath of men and devils to praise Him, by securing the spiritual and eternal good of His afflicted ones. Satan may bind a daughter of Abraham eighteen years, but God acts mercifully and righteously in permitting it. He only permits him to do so for her own good; and when the best time shall have arrived, that daughter shall be loosed. God will deliver her from her infirmity in spite of Satan. A self-confident disciple may be permitted to be sifted by the enemy as wheat, and fall, in order that he may be humbled, learn his weakness, and where his strength lies.

"But when Satan has done the worst God permits him to do, he can only further the highest interests of the holy. He can execute his own purposes of malice, but really he furthers God's own purposes of love and mercy. 'All things work together for good to those who love God.' There are no exceptions. The glorious Word does not say *some* things, but *all* things. To the eye of sight, all things may seem to be against them, but really 'no evil can befall them.' Like Jacob, when his faith was weak, they may exclaim, 'All these things are against me,' when every one of those things are working together for their good.

"Communities and nations may be visited with plagues and pestilence, but it is all right. It is all for the best. No injustice is done. God secures a greater good than He would otherwise. We may not see *the how* in time, but it is enough for faith that God does; and eternity will be long enough to show us *the how*. Time frequently solves these difficulties, but they are generally left for eternity.

"Wars may lay waste large portions of the earth, and millions may be ushered unprepared into the world of spirits. The evil may seem to be almost infinitely great, and there may seem to be no compensating good; but there is, whether we ever see it or not. God does right, and He does that which is best by permitting it. The iniquity of those millions may have become ripe, and, therefore, it is better that the sickle should be put in, and the vintage be gathered and cast into the wine-press of the wrath of God."

Digitized by Google

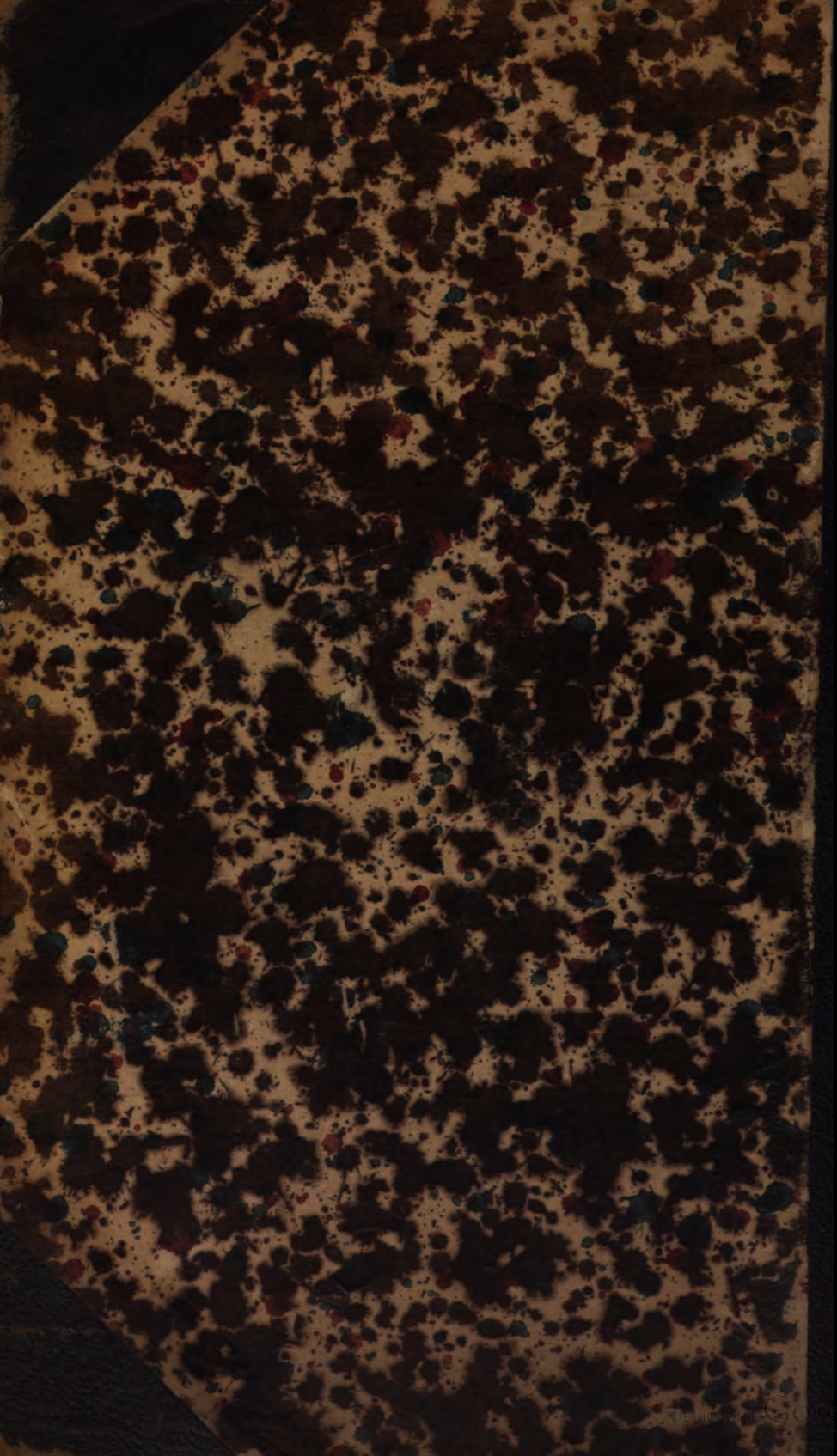
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google